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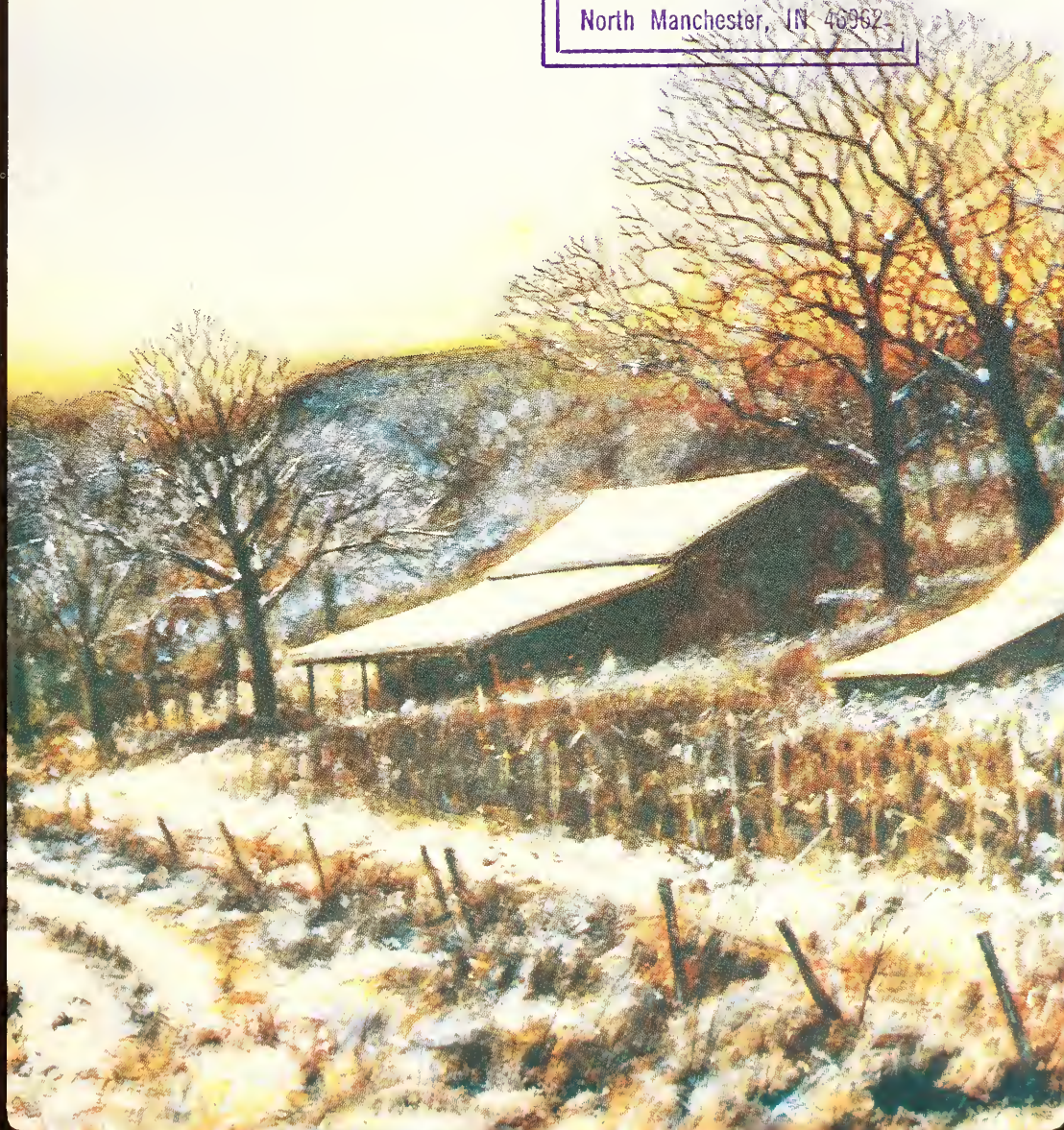




# THE BRETHREN **Evangelist**

JANUARY 1989

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# the salt shaker

by Alvin Shifflett

## Persistence

**S**KUNKY the cat, after traveling two thousand miles in one and one-half years, turned up at his old home in Minneapolis — all the way from Alhambra, California.

The cat's owner reported: "We left Skunky, a black cat with a white stripe, with my sister-in-law in Columbia Heights, Minneapolis. The kids put up a fuss, so we had the cat shipped out to us by air. A year and a half ago the cat disappeared. Now we get a letter from my sister-in-law saying the cat is there, skinny and starved and footsore, but alive!

"I don't know how Skunky did it — he came out by air so he couldn't have seen any landmarks — but we'll leave him this time, right where he belongs. After all, he earned it."

### We give up too soon

Skunky's story is a remarkable account of persistence, a quality all of us could use in 1989. One of our faults today is that we give up too soon, often calling it quits after a single setback. Many allow failure to break them rather than make them.

There is little a person cannot do in this life if he or she sets out to do it — and stays with it. One reason we don't accomplish more is that we are quick quitters. We experience a setback or two and then say it can't be done. We give up. We quit trying.

But history is full of things that couldn't be done. And that means it is also full of people who did them.

The world looks with admiration

upon a man or woman who has staying power. It doesn't take great brains, great riches, or vast opportunities — just staying power. Persistence. If a person believes in something and has the persistence to stay with it — regardless of praise or scorn — the world will ultimately reward that person.

One reason there aren't many people with persistence is because it takes an awfully big person to try again, and again, and again. By contrast, anyone can quit.

### Edison had persistence

Thomas Edison did not give up when his first efforts to find an effective filament for the incandescent lamp failed. He did countless experiments with numberless kinds of materials. As each material failed, he tossed it out the window. Edison's failures eventually reached the second story of his house. His neighbors began to think he had gone crazy. But in spite of the talk, Edison persisted. Then one weary day, on October 21, 1879, after 10,000 failures, he succeeded. His persistence, against overwhelming odds, gave the world the wonderful electric light!

Edison was like George Bernard Shaw, who said: "When I was a young man I observed that nine out of ten things I did were failures. I didn't want to be a failure, so I just did ten times more work."

As we set our goals (or resolutions) for 1989, we should remember that great and good goals aren't easy

to accomplish. At the beginning of 1988 I set four big goals for myself for the new year. I've accomplished two of them and have persistently continued on the third one. The final goal, which was to run a marathon (26.2 miles) will have to wait, but that doesn't mean I can't do it. I've just delayed in accomplishing that particular goal, because the other three goals were more important to me.

Persistence just might be more important than accomplishing the goal itself. Lou Holtz, the coach of the Notre Dame football team, took a 5-6 team and in three years has put it into contention for the national championship. Years ago he could have given up, when as a young coach, he was fired. But instead he sat down and listed all the goals he wanted to accomplish in life. They added up to 108. One of them was to win a national championship. He is only a Fiesta Bowl game away.\* Another was to be named Coach of the Year. This year, his third at Notre Dame, he accomplished that goal. His persistence has paid off.

The major problem with great and good goals is that they require great and good people to accomplish them. And that's where many Brethren eliminate themselves. We think we can't accomplish great things because we don't have the resources, or the talent, or the etc. The amazing thing is that the great and good people who accomplish these great and good goals are simply people of persistence, not resources. They may not be overly blessed with material things, but they are blessed with persistence, or should I call it faith.

### Belief a common factor

The common factor in these people is their belief. They refuse to take no for an answer. They firmly believe that "all things are possible . . .," and like Edison, they persistently push ahead. They're like Robert Benchley, who said, "It took me fifteen years to discover that I had no talent for writing, but I couldn't give it up because by that time I was too famous." [†]

\*This article was written, obviously, before the Fiesta Bowl was played. When you read it, you will probably know whether or not Holtz achieved this goal.

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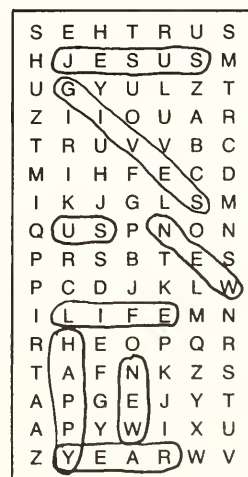
## Children's Page Contributor

As announced last month, a new person will be contributing the "Little Crusader" page during the month's ahead. That person is Mrs. Erica Weidenhamer, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Mrs. Weidenhamer and her husband, Jeff, and their children formerly lived in St. Petersburg, Fla., where Mrs. Weidenhamer worked with Brethren House Ministries. Jeff and Erica are members of the St. Petersburg Brethren Church, and Erica serves on the World Relief Board of the Brethren Church. They have three young children.

Mrs. Weidenhamer's first "Little Crusader" page will appear in next month's EVANGELIST. The children's page in this issue was prepared by the editor.

## Answers to Little Crusader Page:

An Important Message: "Jesus gives us new life. Happy New Year." (See word box at right.)





## Short-term Mission Work:

# A Blessing!

By Steve Huber

I WRITE this account of short-term mission work to encourage, *encourage* others to consider its blessings. "A blessing to work 10-12 hours a day, six days a week?" you ask. "A blessing to be away from your wonderful loving family? A blessing to eat unfamiliar food that upsets your stomach and gives you diarrhea and nausea?"

Yes, a thousand times, *yes!*

Short-term mission work is a blessing because it helps us see how *most* people in the *world* — not just a minority in our country — live. Short-term mission work is a blessing because it keeps our eyes on Jesus instead of on ourselves.

Within the last two years I have worked on three short-term mission projects: one in Haiti; one in Guatemala; and one in Immokalee, Florida. In Haiti, our team of fifteen constructed a church building. In Guatemala, five of us did some very dirty remodeling for a Wycliffe Bible translator. In Immokalee, 25 Ashland College students and advisors worked on a "Habitat for Humanity" project, which was the building of homes.

Before you get the wrong idea, I must tell you that I am not a skilled carpenter. Nevertheless, I was able to help people, and by stepping into their lives for a little while, I now understand their circumstances better. My heart yearns, aches, and cries for these people.

---

*Mr. Huber is a member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, where he chairs the Ministry of Outreach. He is an artist and teaches in Wooster, Ohio. He wrote this article at the request of the General Conference Social Concerns Committee.*

I truly believe that in order for us Americans to extract ourselves from our agendas of what *seems* important, we must see and feel what is going on in the world. To some people, just surviving — finding food and shelter — is what is important. This is a far cry from the concerns of many American Christians.

### Haiti

Of the three projects in which I participated, Haiti was undoubtedly the hardest to bear. Life there seems so hopeless. Thousands of people were walking the streets — without jobs, living in poor housing, wearing shabby clothes, and with little prospect for change. What are their options? Hundreds try to swim to or take a broken-down ship to the United States. Many die trying.

I will try to share a few specific experiences that made an impact on me. When we arrived in Port au Prince, Haiti, in late January of 1987, we found it quite hot. As we rode from the airport through the city, a mass of humanity seemed to press tightly against us. Thousands of people walked the streets. Smoke that poured forth from the little charcoal cooking grills on the sidewalks mixed with the odor from open sewage drainage to produce a horrible smell.

I thought, "Where do these people go for privacy?" There seemed to be no empty space anywhere.

At night it was difficult to sleep because of the racket that poured into our room through the open windows. Sounds of animals braying and mooing, of people laughing and talking, of a voodoo service in progress kept us awake. "How do we sleep in this noise?" we wondered.

Our solution was a ceiling fan. When we turned it on, it sounded like an airplane engine. Yet the roar it made inside the room covered up the incessant noises outside.

During the day, as we worked, there were always lots of people around watching. Again I yearned for space, and wondered, "Why don't these people go somewhere or do something?" We were informed, however, that we were the new local attraction. These people had nowhere else to go, no work (60% unemployment), and no money to go anywhere. The average income of \$150 a year does not give one extra money for entertainment.

### Guatemala

Guatemala was different in that I didn't feel the crush of humanity that I felt in Haiti. But in both places the people were very friendly and eager to talk. (It made it easier to talk to them, of course, if one knew French Creole in Haiti and Spanish in Guatemala.)

The open market was a kaleidoscope of colors and smells — definitely a high point of my experience. You name it and it was there to buy. The people were dressed in all their traditional colorful Indian dress.

In Guatemala, eating black beans three times a day nearly brought to an end my physical existence on this planet. If I never see another black bean, I won't really mind. I wondered if eating these black beans was a form of penance or one of life's cruel jokes. My poor digestive tract yearned for junk food and ice cream. We did have the ever-present Coke — hot, of course. There was no ice to cool it. I would have settled for a glass of sterilized *warm* water.



## Immokalee, Fla.

The "Habitat for Humanity" project in Immokalee, Florida, was culturally much as you would expect it to be in the U.S.A. Yet it provided all of us who participated a real sense of accomplishment. We helped paint three homes, laid floor tile, helped to feed 200 migrant workers their daily noon meal, and worked at a day care center for children of migrant workers. Most of these children spoke French Creole or Spanish.

Each of these short-term mission projects provided opportunities for all of us who participated to feel that we were actually *doing* something and helping someone.

You might ask about cost. Yes, it does take money to go on such a project. But each of these experiences provided an opportunity for God to work and for me to see His provision unfold. I challenge you to let this happen in your life as well.

We can't all move to Haiti and work. That is not practical or realistic. But we all can explore various options for using our vacation time to help people in need. And perhaps if you describe your desire to serve on a short-term mission project to your employer, you might even be given some extra time. At any rate, that request could prove to be a vital testimony in itself.

Is short-term mission work a sac-

*Below, Steve Huber (at r.) and two co-workers stand by a sign describing the Immokalee project. At right, one of the three houses they painted.*



*Two of the writer's co-laborers at work on an addition to the house of a Wycliffe Bible translator in Guatemala.*

rice? On the one hand, yes. But on the other hand, the Lord has cultivated my soul and spirit through these experiences. I have grown.

Has short-term mission work settled my restlessness? No, it has only heightened it; now I want others to go and experience the joy, the pain-growth, and the contemplation that I have experienced. I want others to share in my realization that we are not alone in our pilgrimage on this planet, but together in Jesus.

This past summer the Park Street Brethren Church sent out two teams on short-term mission projects here in the United States. One of the questions that was asked a volunteer keeps sticking in my mind: "Honey, how'd you get a job like this and how much do you get paid?"

Well, the answer is clear. It takes special people to get these kinds of jobs. And the pay, though not monetary, is fabulous. Praise the Lord!

My prayer is that we will all hear the call to serve our brothers and sisters in Christ wherever they may be. Whether it be in our home towns; in Lost Creek, Kentucky; in Haiti; or somewhere else; we must listen to God's call and go. [†]

If you would like information about serving on a specific short-term mission project, here are addresses you can contact:

*Habitat for Humanity*, Habitat and Church St., Americus, GA 31709.

*Wycliffe Associates*, Wycliffe Bible Translators, Huntington Beach, CA 92647.

*Youth With a Mission*, Box 7, Elm Springs, AR 72728-0007.

*Appalachian Service Project*, Boone and Watauga St., Johnson City, TN 37604 (youth and adults).

*Riverside Christian Training School*, Attn. Doran Hostetler, Lost Creek, KY 41348.

*Jonesville Center*, P.O. Box 250, Jonesville, VA 24263 (adults).



# Accountability:

## Application of the Lordship of Christ

By Arden E. Gilmer

**A**CCOUNTABILITY is the application of the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Jesus made some very strong statements with regard to His Lordship. You remember them: "Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I say?" (Lk. 6:46\*). That's accountability. That's application of the Lordship of Jesus Christ — taking the things that Jesus said and putting them into practice in our lives.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus stated the same idea a little differently: "Not every one who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21). That's accountability. That's application of the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul understood accountability. He said in I Thessalonians 2:4 — "... we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men but God, who examines our hearts."

### Accountability is inevitable

Accountability to God is inescapable and inevitable. Paul knew that. "... why do you regard your brother

\*Scripture quotations are from the *New American Standard Bible*.

*Dr. Gilmer is senior pastor of the Park Street Brethren Church in Ashland, Ohio.*

*This article is an edited transcription of a message Dr. Gilmer delivered at General Conference. This was the fourth of six messages by Brethren elders on topics of significance to Brethren. The first three messages appeared in the October, November, and December issues of the EVANGELIST, and the remaining two will appear in coming issues.*

with contempt? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written, 'As I live, says the LORD, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.' So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:10-12).

Brethren, that won't be an option. We will do it whether we want to or not. Every one of our hearts is open to God; every one of our thoughts and minds is open to God. We are accountable to God, and some day we will stand before Him. We must give an account. It is inescapable and inevitable.

### Accountability and discipleship

Accountability is the application of discipleship. Jesus called those who would follow Him and made them accountable to Himself. Eventually, He made them accountable to one another. But He was only putting into practice that which was His own experience as the Son of God while He walked here upon the earth. That was that He made Himself accountable to His Heavenly Father. He said, "I have been sent to do my Father's will." He was accountable to the will of His Father.

If Jesus, the Divine Son of God, was accountable to the will of God, how much more must we be? Accountability is the application of the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

### Accountability and the Bible

Accountability is, secondly, the application of what we Brethren believe about the Bible. If the Bible is indeed God's infallible, inspired word — as we believe it is and know it to be — then we must live by it. That's accountability. You know the

verse: II Timothy 3:16 — "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for [this list:] teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness . . ."

Every item in this list involves accountability. Teaching is just full of accountability. Reproof — in order to reprove you have to have some standard, and there is accountability to that standard. Correction likewise requires a standard for what is right; the Bible gives us that standard, and we are accountable to it. Training in righteousness likewise includes accountability.

And what is the purpose of accountability? "... that the man [or woman] of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work" (II Tim. 3:17). God's design for accountability is to spur us on toward excellence, that we may be thoroughly equipped to do every good work.

The Bible gives us all kinds of lists in various places to which we should be accountable. One such list is in Ephesians 4:25-32. Another is in Colossians 3:12-17. Accountability is the application of the teaching of Scripture in the life of a disciple of Jesus Christ.

### Accountability means commitment

Thirdly, accountability has to do with our commitment to one another as a family. We are brethren. Accountability to one another is helpful and healthy. One of the truths that we have somewhat lost, or at least clouded, in The Brethren Church is that we are a covenant community. We have entered into agreement with one another.

The paper on the meaning of membership that we adopted during General Conference (see pp. 10-12 of



## ***If we are serious about our growth in Christian life and character under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, we need to be accountable not only to God, but also to a group of brothers and sisters in Christ.***

the June EVANGELIST) is right on target as far as I'm concerned. Commitment to Jesus Christ includes commitment to the body of Christ.

When new members stand before us in our churches and take their membership vows, they are not the only ones going on record before God. We, the members of the congregation, also stand and covenant before God to be involved in their lives — to love, encourage, and support them, and to uphold them in our prayers. And yet, at the end of the service we often go our separate ways without even reaching out to shake hands with the new members. How, then, can we call ourselves a covenant community? Accountability is application of what it means to be a member of the body of Christ — a covenant community in a local congregation.

### **Accountability in small groups**

It is important, if accountability is to have any fruit in our lives, for us to be accountable to some small group of individuals. Bruce Larson, in his book, *There's a Lot More to Health Than Not Being Sick*, says, "Behavioral sciences in recent years have expounded the simple truth that behavior that is observed changes. People who are accountable by their own choice to a group of friends, to a therapy group, to a psychiatrist or a pastoral counselor, to a study or a prayer group, are people who are serious about changing their behavior, and they are finding that change is possible. Studies done in factories have proven that both quality and quantity of work increases when the employees know that they are being observed. If only God knows what I'm doing, since I know He won't tell, I tend to make all kinds of excuses for myself. But if I must report to another or group of others, I begin to monitor my behavior. If someone is keeping an eye on me, my behavior improves."

Have you ever followed a state highway patrolman on an interstate

highway? Have you observed what happens to traffic when a patrol car is present? Everybody's behavior changes!

Our behavior is related to whether or not we think it is observed. That's accountability. A management principle is that people don't do what we expect; they do what we inspect.

Weight Watchers charges you money for accountability. Oh, they'll give you a diet. But the real teeth of that diet is the weigh in, when you have to go and weigh yourself in the presence of other people. That's accountability.

As a young boy, I took piano lessons. They lasted until the teacher had a nervous breakdown. But there was accountability in those lessons. Every week I had a piano lesson (whether I wanted it or not), during which the teacher observed what had happened in the previous week. And if nothing had changed (because I hadn't practiced), she had a certain speech she gave me.

Our behavior is conditioned by whether or not we believe it is observed. Therefore, if we are serious about our growth in Christian life and character under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, we need to be accountable not only to God (that is inevitable), but also to a group of brothers and sisters in Christ.

### **An environment of love**

This kind of accountability is voluntary — we choose to submit ourselves to one another. It's not my role to go around and pick out five people and tell them I'm making them accountable to me. That's not the way it works. Rather, accountability works in an environment of love and trust. I'm called to be accountable to a group of brothers or sisters in Christ whom I trust; who will love me; who will allow me to be vulnerable before them; who will not crucify me for my sins; who will forgive me, support me, pray with me, hug me, cry with me, and encourage me. That's the atmosphere for accountability in the body of Christ.

Unfortunately, we've all been stung. Years ago I sent up a trial balloon with a man who I thought was a true friend. I wanted to see if I could really trust him. But within a week, what I had said to that man was all around. You know what? I wouldn't make myself accountable to that man.

Accountability requires confidentiality. It requires integrity. It requires zipping it up. That's what it means to be a covenant community.

### **The style of accountability**

What about the style of accountability in the church? Frankly, Brethren, there's one thing I fear with accountability, and that's legalism. I believe it is a deadly monster — a plague. Legalism saps the strength and vitality right out of the body of Christ. Paul said that the letter kills. It surely does. But the Spirit gives life.

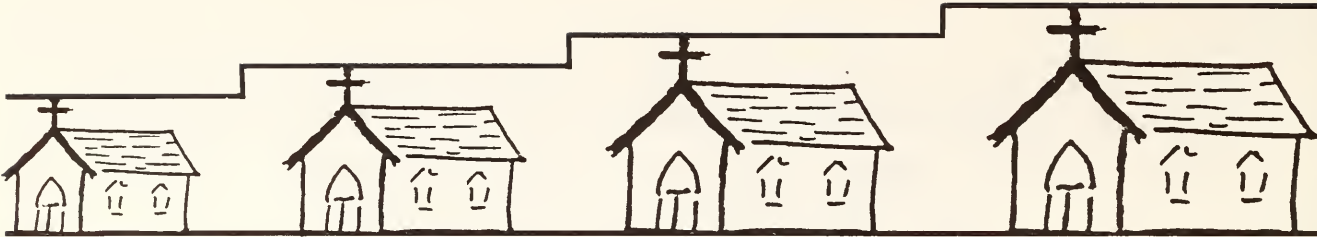
When we're talking about accountability, we're not talking about legalism. We're talking instead about a discipline that shapes and forms and enlarges spiritual life. Accountability is of the Spirit. Legalism is of the letter. The hallmark of legalism is judgmentalism, Pharisaism. It's the attitude, "I'm going to throw stones at you; it doesn't make any difference if I have skeletons in my closet; I'm going to throw stones at you. I'm going to show you no mercy. I'm good; you're bad; and here comes the rock." That's judgmentalism.

Paul clearly says that we are going to have to give an account of ourselves unto God. Then he said, "Therefore let us not judge one another any more . . ." (Rom. 14:13).

While the hallmark of legalism is judgmentalism, the hallmark of accountability is encouragement. It includes nurture, love, grace, and mutuality. It says, "I'm a redeemed sinner; you're a redeemed sinner; let's help each other grow in the Lord Jesus Christ." That's accountability.

(continued on page 16)





# Plateaus of Church Growth, And How to Get Off Them Part I

By Dale R. Stoffer

*The following article grew out of a meeting in October of Leadership Council, a group composed of General Conference Executive Council members, denominational executives, several pastors, and representatives from Ashland College and Theological Seminary. As a result of a discussion in that meeting, Dr. Stoffer was asked to write an article identifying plateaus in church growth and offering suggestions for rising above those plateaus.*

*Dr. Stoffer is pastor of the Smoky Row Brethren Church in Columbus, Ohio, a Home Mission congregation that has grown from zero to approximately 90 in attendance during the past eight years. He also serves as Church Planting Consultant for the Missionary Board and is Past-Moderator of the General Conference of The Brethren Church.*

**W**HY CAN'T WE get off this plateau? Have you found yourself asking this question at times about your congregation? It seems that your church grows to a certain number, then stays there for a period of time. More often than not, the church then slowly declines in attendance until it experiences another growth phase, which ends at about the same plateau it leveled off at several years before.

Sound familiar? If it does, you are not alone, because the above scenario is played out by most congregations during their lifetime.

As a church planter, I have been able to witness firsthand the growth of a congregation from about 12 to over 90. We have struggled through several plateaus. As I have reflected upon these times of limited growth, I have come to realize that there are definite reasons why a congregation stalls in its growth at each stage. In

this and a subsequent article, I would like to offer reasons why churches tend to plateau at certain attendance levels, suggest ways to move off of each plateau, provide counsel on how to live through a period of stymied growth, and offer practical applications of this material to The Brethren Church.

Most Brethren churches fall into one of four stages. These stages and names (of my creation) for each are:

1. 0 to 40 — The awkward stage
2. 40 to 75 — The organizing stage
3. 75 to 120 — The specializing and building stage
4. 120 to 200 — The pastor exhaustion stage

There are some general observations that can be made about all four of these stages. First, churches will tend to plateau at the upper end of each stage: 30-45, 65-80, 110-125, 175-200. The reason for this is that a *critical issue* must be dealt with at each plateau before a church can move on to the next stage. It is important that a church begin to act like a congregation in the next stage in order to move forward. Obviously, risk and sacrifice are involved, but the alternative is a slow slide backward because the critical issue has not been addressed. A drop in numbers may not be as serious in the third and fourth stages, but it can be fatal if allowed to continue in the first and second stages.

A second observation is that at each stage a church will tend to draw different kinds of people. Likewise, at each stage the "package" of skills needed by a pastor will vary. Let us consider these and other points as they relate to each stage.

## The Awkward Stage: 0 to 40

Small congregations in The Brethren Church seem to be of three types: new home mission works; declining rural and small town congregations; and inner city churches that face changing neighborhoods. Though the settings may vary, the basic challenges facing these congregations are quite similar.

The basic problem at this stage is that the church doesn't really seem like a church to new people. They wonder if you aren't a cult (especially if you do not have a building), or if there isn't some reason for your being so small (internal problems, lack of interest in new people, an inward focus, etc.). Obviously you don't have enough people to staff the "essential" positions of a full Sunday school program, a youth program, musicians, pastor.

If a church is to move out of this stage, the ideal pastor is strong in evangelism. He is energetic and definitely a people-person. What he may lack in the area of administration, he makes up by his involvement in the lives of his people. He has a vision for the church which he regularly presents to his people.

The people one draws in this stage are quite varied. The first group, which is especially true of home mission churches, are denominational people. People who come to a new work because of denominational ties can be a help or a hindrance. The main criterion that determines which they will be is their understanding of the distinction between form and function.

*(continued on page 17)*



*The beginning of this new year is an excellent time to resolve again to engage in . . .*

# The Work of Prayer

By G. Roger Schoenhals

**W**HEN YOU PRAY, Jesus said, go into your closet and shut the door (Matt. 6:6). Have you ever done that? I mean, have you ever literally gone into a closet, shut the door, and prayed?

I tried it once. Among the hangers, clothes, and shoes I got down on my knees and prayed. I remember feeling odd and a bit claustrophobic.

Surely Jesus meant more than physically placing oneself in a closet. I think he was getting at the idea that personal prayer is a private matter and one demanding effort in shutting out competing thoughts.

He was saying that serious prayer requires concentration; and concentration is work. So the first thing about prayer is this: Prayer is work.

## Prayer is work

Shutting out inner and outer distractions takes effort. And so does the practice of having a consistent prayer time. I've made countless resolutions to get up early and spend time alone with God in prayer.

Then comes the morning after a short night. I'm groggy and sluggish. *I'll do it later*, I tell myself. Then I reset the alarm and sink back into slumber.

If I try to establish a regular time later in the day, I battle both expected and unexpected interruptions. Like most busy people, I'm plagued by pressures, deadlines, phone calls, "emergencies," etc. Sometimes I think the devil works overtime just to keep me from prayer.

*Mr. Schoenhals is a free-lance writer who lives in Seattle, Washington.*

I also find it difficult to pray for others. By the time I finish imploring God for my own needs, I'm ready to get on with my day. To linger longer and lift others up to God takes added effort. My interests are so demanding, their interests seem far away. It's hard to consistently intercede for others.

Another arduous aspect of prayer is to wait silently before the Lord. Even though the Scriptures tell us to "Be still, and know that I am God" (Ps. 46:10)\*, and that "they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength" (Isa. 40:31), I have a hard time just sitting there. When I finish my list, I'm anxious to say, "Amen." Listening for the Lord to speak is hard work.

Prayer is toilsome when answers are delayed. I was unemployed for more than a year, and it became increasingly difficult to keep bringing that need before the Lord. I was frustrated and impatient. I found it hard to wait and fit into the Lord's timing.

Finally, prayer is work when we truly say, "Not my will, but Thine be done." The Bible describes Jesus' great agony as He prayed this prayer in the Garden (Lk. 22:42-44). Sincere prayer requires our total submission to God.

Consider some other examples of strenuous prayer found in the Bible. Abraham interceded long and hard for Sodom (Gen. 18); Jacob wrestled with the angel (Gen. 32); Moses agonized over the people of Israel (Num. 14); David poured out his heart in a wrenching prayer of repentance (Ps.

\*Quotations from the Bible are from the Revised Standard Version.

51); Solomon prayed earnestly at the dedication of the Temple (I Kgs. 8); Hezekiah prayed desperately for help concerning the invasion of Sennacherib (II Kgs. 19); Ezra, "weeping and casting himself down," interceded for the Israelites (Ezr. 9).

In the New Testament, we read of Jesus rising long before daylight to pray (Mk. 1:35). Paul prayed "earnestly night and day" for his friends (I Thess. 3:10). In the Upper Room, the 120 "devoted themselves to prayer" (Acts 1:14). The Church in Jerusalem made "earnest prayer" for Peter (Acts 12:5). The Church in Antioch sent out Paul and Barnabas only after "fasting and praying" (Acts 13:3).

Serious prayer involves serious effort. There are, of course, those occasions when prayer seems effortless and even enjoyable. Usually, though, such times are preceded by periods of sustained effort. There's simply no getting around it: Prayer is work.

## Prayer leads to work

The second great fact about prayer is this: Prayer leads to work. In the Lord's Prayer we say, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." The relationship is clear: If we want God's forgiveness, we must forgive others — even those we've grown to dislike. Does that not require the hardest kind of work? Indeed, how can we do this apart from God's grace in our lives?

True prayer is self-involving. For example, if a student asks God to help him do well on a test, he better crack the books and study. If I pray



for distressed people in my community, I'd better be right in there doing my part to help meet their needs. And how can I pray for overseas missionaries and not lift a finger to write an encouraging word or open my wallet to send needed funds?

Someone has said that we are God's hands and feet. It is through His human instruments that He accomplishes His will. He uses our meager resources to answer our prayers. Like the child with the little sack lunch, God multiplies our gifts and efforts far beyond our expectations. But, first, we must be willing to become involved in His answer to our prayers.

William Runyan, the hymn writer, said it this way:

*Lord, I have shut the door,  
Strengthen my heart;  
Yonder awaits the task—  
I share a part.*

Peter Marshall, former chaplain of the United States Senate, once said, "Let us be part of the answer and not part of the problem." When I pray, am I willing to roll up my sleeves and be part of the answer? Someone has said, "Prayer without work is hypocrisy; work without prayer is presumption."

Prayer doesn't end when we say, "Amen." That's just the beginning. We have uttered a prayer, now we must live it. Prayer leads to work.

### **Prayer works!**

The third basic fact about prayer is simply: Prayer works. We see this in Scripture, in history, in the church, and in our personal experience. The poet writes:

*I know not by what methods  
rare,*

*But this I know—God answers  
prayer.*

I have found this abundantly true. When I completed graduate school, my wife and I were at a loss to know where to go and what to do. We had a five-week-old son and no money.

We committed our way to the Lord and began to pack our belongings. Soon, we believed, God would reveal His answer to our prayers.

A few opportunities appeared on the horizon and we dutifully checked them out. But we felt uncomfortable with them and so we continued to pray — and wait.

Within two weeks our prayers were marvelously answered and we set sail for a position that seemed to perfectly match our needs, abilities, and expectations.

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***"Prayer doesn't end when we say, 'Amen.' That's just the beginning. We have uttered a prayer, now we must live it. Prayer leads to work."***

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Some time ago I interviewed a Christian man who has been healed of acute leukemia. The doctors warned him months before that he had only days to live. As the news spread, thousands (literally) of Christians across the country prayed for God to intervene in his life. The doctors are now saying, "We've never seen anything like this." We are hearing the word "miracle."

But we don't have to look to the spectacular for evidence of answered prayer. We find it in a multitude of little things that occur along the way. He helps us recall things. He helps us forgive offending foes. He helps us accomplish difficult tasks. He helps us discover His daily will for our lives.

Prayer brings us close to the heart of God, where we find our perspectives and priorities sharpened. Prayer unleashes inner strength and confidence. Prayer brings peace and causes us to rejoice.

Sometimes the answer is no, sometimes yes. Sometimes we receive the answer immediately and sometimes it's delayed. But one thing we know for sure: when we pray in faith, God will grant us the answer that is best for us. He always answers our cries according to His infinite love, wisdom, and power.

I read a little ad in a magazine once that encouraged readers to send in prayer requests. Checking into the ad, I discovered a man, 86 years old, who is living in a retirement home. He takes these requests and puts them into a box. Each Saturday night he gathers together some of the other elderly folks and they pray for the hundreds of requests in the box.

Pressing my inquiry further, I discovered that this man has believed

in the power of prayer most of his life. He is enthusiastic about prayer and he recounts a list of answers a mile long. One religious leader said of him, "He has done more to promote prayer than any one I know."

For several years I read the submissions to an annual writing contest for a religious magazine. Nearly 1,000 articles addressed the subject, "God's Help in Time of Crisis." Though different in many respects, all the manuscripts proclaimed one central message: Prayer works.

The evangelist, Billy Graham, was once asked what his secret was. Without hesitation he said, "Prayer."

It was Tennyson who wrote: "More things are wrought by prayer than the world dreams of."

Prayer is the greatest force in all the world. It's the wheel that moves the church. It's the key that unlocks the blessings of God.

Jesus taught that we "ought always to pray and not lose heart" (Lk. 18:1). In a time of great trial, He said, "Watch and pray . . ." (Mk. 14:38). Paul said, "Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication" (Eph. 6:18); and he tells us to "pray constantly" (1 Thess. 5:17).

At a Presidential Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C., one of the clergymen opened his prayer with the words, "Lord God Almighty, help us to pray." In spite of all the benefits of prayer, we still need the admonition to pray. Perhaps it's the work of prayer that hinders us.

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***"We don't have to look to the spectacular for evidence of answered prayer. We find it in a multitude of little things that occur along the way."***

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Perhaps it's knowing that true prayer will require our involvement in the answer. Whatever the reason, there's no substitute for prayer. No short cut.

When we obey the Lord's admonition to go into the "closet," shut the door, and pray, we will find that "your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (Matt. 6:6). Prayer works! [†]





# Jesus Is Lord

"... that in everything He might  
have the supremacy" (Col. 1:18).

By Moderator Kenneth L. Sullivan

**T**HE LORDSHIP of Christ commands a life that extends beyond the individual. The Christian faith has a corporate nature that intertwines the life of each believer with every other believer in the body of Christ. We are, willingly or unwillingly, a part of the church. Some may not agree with my thoughts, but I challenge you to examine anew with me the scriptures that speak to this matter.

## The church is important

Jesus said, "... I will build my church ..." (Matt. 16:18). These well-known words of Christ bring us face to face with the importance of the church. Jesus Christ Himself, the very Son of God, of whom it is said that "all things were created by him and for him," is the one who wishes to build this church, His church. So important and critical is this work that Jesus promised that the very gates of death would not prevail against it (Matt. 16:18).

The New Testament emphasizes the great interest that God has in the church. It is called "the pillar and foundation of the truth," "God's household," "the church of the living God," "the body of Christ," "God's temple," "God's building" (1 Tim. 3:15; Eph. 1:23; 1 Cor. 3:16; 3:9).

The New Testament further emphasizes that "Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her"

(Eph. 5:25). Would Christ have loved the church if it did not have great value in His eyes? Would He have sacrificed Himself for it if it was not of such great worth to Him?

If God attributes to the church such importance, can we omit it from our concerns? Our Lord commands a life of obedience, of loving what He loves, of focusing on His concerns, of sacrificing for that which is important to Him. The church is neither an addendum to the Christian faith, nor a divine afterthought. It has always existed within the providential plan of God, always at the focus of His concern, requiring allegiance from those professing faith in Christ. There is no loyalty to our Lord that excludes the church.

## The church is real

The church is not some "other-worldly," indiscernible "something." It is real flesh, bone, and blood, made up of all kinds of people, with a multitude of personalities, including their triumphs and failures, their spiritual depth or shallowness. The Bible offers raw honesty concerning those who occupy God's house. These individuals come in all shapes and sizes with a variety of quirks, idiosyncrasies, oddities, abnormalities, and obsessions.

You will not find one simplistic or pure characterization of the church

in scripture. Instead, you discover a mixture of people bonded together by the redemptive work of their Savior, redeemed through His shed blood, and made one by the work of God's Spirit in their lives.

It is the church that Christ loved and gave Himself for, the very one that exists on planet earth. It is made up of local congregations from such places as Canton, Milledgeville, Elkhart, Pittsburgh, Sarasota, Saint James, Lathrop, Tucson, and Cheyenne. It is this church that we are to love: the one that combines the best and worst in people, both their beauty and ugliness; the one that always falls short of God's standards and never measures up to our own.

We are called to love our church — the one to which we belong, the one we criticize, the one about which we complain. We are called to love it all the same. We are called to love that church we attend on Sunday and midweek, with the people who populate its pews. We are to love them, each and every one.

## The church is the Lord's

No matter what happens on the local level, no matter how impossible the situation, it is still the Lord's church. We are called to love it not because it is lovely, lovable, or worthy of our love, but because Christ loves His church (1 Thess 1:4; Eph. 5:2).

If we are unable to express our love for the church on a local level, then any professed commitment to the church is an established lie. The local church is the proving ground for the reality of our faith. Expressions of love at this level demonstrate our understanding of God's grace for us. By our love we bear testimony that our own unlovable character has been salvaged by Christ's redemptive love and filled with His grace, which enables us to respond in kind to others, especially those of the household of faith (1 John 4:7-21; Gal. 6:10).

I have no delusions about the church. It never has been what it should be, nor will it be until that great day when Christ receives His Bride. Until then, however, the Lord of the church decrees that His subjects commit themselves to that which He intends to build, the church. [†]

# Ashland Theological Seminary

## "Equipping the Church"



By Dr. Frederick  
J. Finks

Vice President  
Ashland Theological  
Seminary

IN HIS LETTER to the Ephesians, Paul speaks clearly of the mission of leadership. "And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ . . ." (Eph. 4:11-12).

For Paul, leadership meant responsibility. Responsibility for the church and responsibility

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*"Christian leadership is not a platform, but a privilege."*

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to the church. This was not new with Paul, for Jesus had clearly modeled what a Christian leader is to be:

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant . . . (Phil. 2:5-7)

To His disciples, Jesus identified the role of a Christian leader: Whoever would be first among you must be your slave; whoever wishes to save his life must lay it down; whoever would be great must become the least.

Jesus further distinguished between a Christian and non-Christian leader by citing an example from society. "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you



Dr. Fred Finks



Construction of new classroom building.

shall be your servant . . ." (Matt. 20:25-26).

Christian leadership is not a platform, but a privilege. A privilege to serve the church and the living Christ. With this as a foundation, Paul explained to the Church at Ephesus that leaders had a special calling of God, and that it entailed a work of service, that of equipping the Church.

Ashland Theological Seminary takes seriously this mandate for ministry. Christian leaders who are trained at Ashland Seminary are trained for ministry.

The Mission Statement for the Seminary clearly identifies the purpose and objectives of an education at Ashland. Observe our mission:

Ashland Theological Seminary exists to equip committed Christians for leadership – in ministries of the pastorate, missions, education, counseling, and community life.

Ashland Theological Seminary seeks to serve men and women who are preparing to minister in a variety of global contexts. Ashland Theological Seminary intends its graduates to be servant-leaders in the ministries to which they are called in the Church and the world.

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*"Ministry is at the heart of  
Ashland Theological Seminary."*

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Ministry is at the heart of Ashland Theological Seminary. We take seriously our responsibility to provide a place of learning where God's word is foremost. We take seriously our role in preparing leaders for the Church. We take seriously that ministry is a privilege.

"And He gave some as . . . pastors . . . for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ . . ."



# Ashland Theological Seminary

## "He Gave Some As . . . Pastors"



COMMERCIALS and advertisements have become an inseparable part of our lives. It is not uncommon in a half-hour television program to be subjected to ten minutes of advertisements. One must admit that we have come a long way from the days of the medicine show, when elixirs were advertised on the side of medicine wagons, to today's slick Madison Avenue appeals. Or have we?

*"All of us can be encouragers."*

Common among the commercials are ads for the Armed Forces. Again we have come a long way from the poster of a stern-looking Uncle Sam, with finger pointing and the slogan, "Uncle Sam Wants You," to today's advertisement of the sharp-looking marine with the slogan, "We're looking for a few good men with the mettle to become Marines." Or have we?

Does Madison Avenue really make a difference? You can bet your last dollar it does, and they are out to get it from you. Madison Avenue spares no expense in packaging what sells. Researchers work around the clock to determine what consumers like best. They know what color sells best; they know what words attract attention, like NEW or IMPROVED; they know what slogans stick — like Wendy's multimillion-dollar campaign, "Where's the beef?" Unlimited time is devoted to getting the consumer to buy the product.

The Catholic Church, facing a shortage in priests, decided to try advertising. Billboards, television commercials, and magazine advertisements pictured good-looking young men in clerical collars saying, "The pay isn't much, but the rewards are eternal."

Should The Brethren Church try advertising to fill the vacant churches we have today and to head off the shortages of tomorrow?

Should we go the way of Madison Avenue?

Should we raise our voices with catchy slogans?



I THINK NOT. Instead let us listen to the still small voice of God. It is God who does the calling. Let us not get caught up in the frenzy of society; instead let us turn to the God of our salvation, who goes into the highways and byways to make his feast complete.

Is there no part we can play in helping call persons to ministry? I believe there is. We can restore the image of ministry. Instead of urging our children to go for the best-paying jobs, jobs that offer advancements, jobs that offer status and prestige, let us encourage them in ministry.

All of us can be encouragers. I recently talked with a retired Sunday school teacher who commented, "Mr. B and I never let a kid go through our class without us asking if they had considered the ministry."

*"Ministry is everybody's business."*

As I was in the midst of writing this article, the phone rang. It was a layman from Pennsylvania concerned about the lack of young people going into full-time Christian ministry. He said, "We've got to do something about it. Every pastor should have a list of young people he is encouraging for ministry. Let's get those lists and follow up."

Ministry is everybody's business. Whose voice are you listening to? "And He called some to be . . . ."



# Ashland Theological Seminary

## "Equipping the Church for Service"



FOR OVER TWO YEARS, the Brethren faculty at the Seminary have met regularly to pray for the Church and to explore ways in which the Seminary might help strengthen the Church.

As a result CALM was born. CALM stands for Church Administration for Leadership and Management. It is designed to help pastors better understand their own personality as it combines with leadership style and management.

We have been told that during the 21st century, the middle class in America will be more highly educated and will therefore likely demand a greater role in decision-making processes in the local church. Authoritarian leadership will no longer be the acceptable *modus operandi* and, consequently, a team approach to ministry will be necessary.

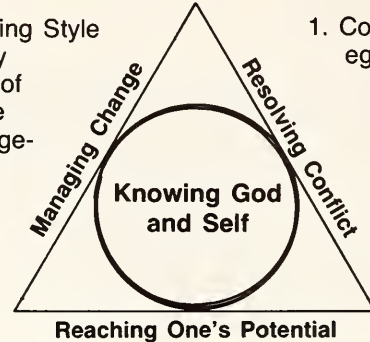
CALM is designed to help pastors know themselves better, their strengths and weaknesses, and how they can adapt within their ministry setting to create a stronger ministry.

Nearly 90 Brethren pastors are involved in the CALM project. Reports have been overwhelmingly positive:

### The Calm Project

1. Learning Style Inventory  
2. Style of Influence  
3. Management Inventory

1. Conflict Strategy  
2. Spiritual gifts Inventory



1. Myers-Briggs

"It's the best thing that has happened in my ministry."

"It's great. I only wish I'd had it twenty years ago."

"Thanks for making CALM possible. It's my light at the end of the tunnel."

"I learned things about myself that I didn't know."

The seminary is providing the CALM project at no cost to Brethren pastors. (The entire project costs approximately \$6,000.00) Dr. Joseph Shultz, president of Ashland College and Seminary, stated, "It's a way we can give back to the Church for all their faithful years of service to the Seminary."

It is hoped that CALM will have a lasting impact on the leadership and ultimately the Church.



Dr. Doug Little (l.), Dr. Jerry Flora, and Dr. Mary Ellen Drushal discuss the CALM project.

# Ashland Theological Seminary

*Your Help is Needed to Continue Ensuring the Future for Tomorrow*



## How Can You Help?

Helping to ensure the future takes real commitment from both churches and individuals who believe in tomorrow.

### Church Support

The Seminary, like all of our national boards, depends upon church support through Fair Share Giving. The General Conference has approved \$11.50 per Church Growth Index point as the Fair Share support for the Seminary.

The Brethren Church directly benefits from Seminary-trained leadership throughout the church, in national office, as missionaries, and as college and seminary professors. Every church should strive to accomplish its Fair Share in our Seminary.

### Scholarship Support

We cannot express our gratitude enough to the many individuals who have begun scholarships or given to our scholarship fund. Several churches and organizations have also begun special scholarships. In 1982, our endowed scholarship fund was only \$172,000. TODAY it is nearly \$750,000.

Anyone, individual or church, can create a scholarship for only \$5,000. (It can be given over a period of 1-5 years.) The impact this has on providing the future is untold. Write to the Seminary for more details.



### Capital Campaign

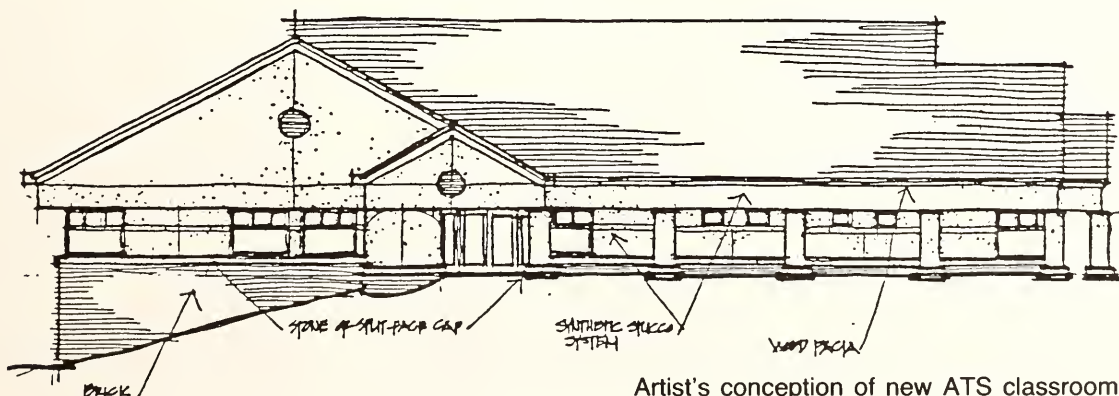
The Seminary is involved in a major campaign to raise \$1,000,000 to build a new classroom building and enlarge the library. Response has been very positive. To date over \$720,000 has been pledged towards this campaign.

Gifts, large and small, have come from a number of persons, Brethren and non-Brethren, who believe in our work and ministry. We still need to raise \$280,000.

Your help is needed to ensure the future. You can help by:

- Praying for the Seminary, our faculty, and students;
- Encouraging your church to do its Fair Share;
- Becoming personally involved by becoming a Partner in Excellence.

For more details, write to ATS, 910 Center Street, Ashland, Ohio, 44805.



Artist's conception of new ATS classroom building.



# Accountability

(continued from page 7)

The model for accountability in the church is not the military but the family. It is not a hierarchical, superior/inferior arrangement. Rather, it's a mutual agreement between brothers and sisters in Christ.

Sure, the military demands accountability. But it does so by ordering, by dismissing, by dishonorable discharges. It does it with no concern for the person. Its only concern is for the rules.

But that's not the way a family operates. And the model for accountability in the church is the family. The family operates on love, on redemption. The family is concerned not only with redeeming the situation and making wrongs right, but also with redeeming people and showing them love. The family places a very high value on persons and on relationships.

We are held accountable, then, in the loving context of a family, not in the harshness of a military tribunal. Paul said to the Galatians, "Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to yourselves, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ."

Accountability comes in an atmosphere of trust, of love, of caring, of confidentiality, of prayer, of tears, and of loyalty. Chuck Swindoll in his book, *Living Above the Level of Mediocrity*, says: "Accountability includes opening one's life to a few carefully selected trusted loyal confidants, who speak the truth; who have the right to examine, to question, to appraise, and to give counsel."

Each of us needs the pressure of accountability to a select group of people whom we trust and who love us and will stick with us through thick and thin. The goal of such accountability is growing in the image of Christ.

## The local church and accountability

How does the local church hold itself accountable to its purpose? We say that our purpose is to go and make disciples of all the nations. Ac-

countability says, "Are we doing it?" Jesus said, "By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples" (Jn. 15:8).

One of the most beneficial things we have done during my years as pastor of the Park Street Church was to go through a priority-setting exercise several years ago. It started in a Board of Administration meeting in which we brainstormed on what our church must do in order to be the church God wants us to be. No idea was shot down. We then grouped those ideas together and came up with ten priorities.

These ten priorities were then submitted to the congregation in ballot form during a Sunday morning service. The congregation was asked — prayerfully and in the light of Scripture — to choose five of these and to rank those five in order of importance.

## Park Street's five priorities

By means of that process the Park Street Brethren Church established the following five priorities: (1) Outreach — making disciples; (2) Assimilation — welcoming new people into the body; (3) Fellowship — strengthening the fellowship fabric of our church; (4) Stewardship — making tithing our beginning point for giving; (5) Involvement — increasing the number of people using their spiritual gifts for ministry in the church.

Those five priorities guide our congregation, and we attempt to hold ourselves accountable to them. They are the priorities not only for the congregation as a whole, but also for every group within the church. The W.M.S. groups can measure themselves by these priorities. Every Sunday school class, Bible study group, share group, and support group can measure itself by these five priorities. The pastoral staff can measure itself by these priorities.

Many of the ministries that have developed at Park Street Church have come as a direct result of these priorities. I frankly do not believe these ministries would have been started if we had not gone through that priority-setting process, and then held ourselves accountable.

One example that vividly sticks

out in my mind of the impact these priorities have had on the total direction of Park Street Brethren Church is this: Shortly after we had gone through this priority-setting process, we were searching for an associate pastor. As the committee sat together writing the job description for this new position, we put these priorities on the table. The committee realized that if these were the priorities of the congregation, they should be reflected in the way we staffed the church.

After considering these priorities, the committee wrote a job description for a pastor of evangelism and discipleship to be the associate pastor of our church. Why did we do this? Because the congregation had said that outreach is our number one priority.

This is an illustration of being accountable to our priorities and of the impact such accountability can have. Many of the new ministries of Park Street Brethren Church are a direct result of the decision made that night while writing a job description and of God's leading us to and giving us a man uniquely gifted to do that job.

What is giving you and your congregation direction? To what are you holding yourself accountable? When you have a business meeting in your church and you ask yourself at the conclusion of that meeting, "What was the purpose of this meeting and did we accomplish that purpose?" what standard are you using by which to answer that question?

## We must be accountable

Brethren, we have to hold ourselves accountable. *Why?* So that we might be excellent for the Lord Jesus Christ. So that we might be thoroughly trained in righteousness. So that we might be conformed both individually and collectively to the image of the body of Christ — the image of Christ Himself. And so that we might be faithfully doing that work to which He has called us.

Accountability is healthy. Accountability is positive. Accountability is good. Accountability is necessary. Accountability is the application of everything that we believe as Brethren about the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the life of discipleship, and the purpose of the church. [†]

# Growth Plateaus

(continued from page 8)

Function, as explained by Gene Getz, is the basic calling every church has, based on biblical mandates. Function transcends time and culture and includes such "givens" as worship, biblical teaching, fellowship, evangelism, social concern. Though these functions remain constant, the forms which they take in any particular culture or time may vary.

Denominational people are an asset to the extent that they avoid the trap of insisting that the way their home church did it must be the right way. If they cannot be flexible and willing to try new forms, they may hamper the work of a new church.

## People with special needs

A second type of person attracted to this stage are people with special needs — those who have gone through a divorce or a financial, medical, or emotional crisis. These people are attracted because the pastor has the time to become involved in their lives. Certainly such people provide a great opportunity for ministry, but an excessive number of them can wear out a pastor and possibly divert him from his primary calling — to build the church.

These people may be very important for the future of the church, however, for if they are carefully disciplined and trained, they can develop into mature leaders. One way to free the pastor from the heavy demands of these people with special needs is to form care or support groups in which they themselves, with the direction of mature leadership, build one another up.

A third type of person drawn to this stage is the pioneer. While it may be true that the established church longs for more pioneers (people with energy and vision who long for new frontiers) to counteract the homesteaders (people who are satisfied with the status quo and resist change), the same is not necessarily true of the small church. Pioneers are especially drawn to the excitement and challenge of a new church and are willing to throw themselves into the work. What is

wrong with that? Nothing!

The problem with pioneers is that they are not people you can necessarily build upon. They may become disenchanted when you become more of an "established" church (when you build or ask for membership commitment), or they may simply feel the challenge is gone and want to move on to a new frontier. How you long for a few homesteaders at this stage — people who will put down their roots and whom you can count on for the long haul! Unfortunately, you do not pick up many at this stage because you don't have a Sunday school class yet for their four-year-old or a youth program for their teenager. (Note that these last two types of people — those with special needs and pioneers — tend to be more mobile than the average person, which adds another problem to this stage.)

The critical need at this stage is to try to cover as many bases as possible, especially in Sunday school and a youth program. To begin dropping parts of the program, particularly in these areas, is an ominous sign. Yet the problem of burnout is also critical; because so much is asked of so few, their stamina is quickly taxed. The pastor and church leaders must be very sensitive to this problem or key personnel may be lost because of exhaustion. As a solution, consider running Sunday school and youth only during the school year and have youth only every other week.

Is there anything good at this stage? It is important at this or any stage to use your size to your advantage. Emphasize fellowship and flexibility. Enlist others in your vision for the future by sharing that vision with those who have spiritual gifts in areas critical to the work of the church. Maintain your trust in God and expect that He will honor your vision.

## The Organizing Stage: 40 to 75

The main issue facing this stage is the necessity of leading your people to maturity and bringing them to the point where they "own" the ministry of the church for themselves. Especially in a church-planting situation, the people need to realize that the ministry belongs not just to the pastor but to the congregation as a whole. As in the previous

stage, there continues to be the struggle to cover the essential bases, but the increasing "bench strength" eases some of the pressure on the "first string."

## The ideal pastor

The ideal pastor for a church of this size is still a good evangelist, but he especially needs to be a good teacher and discipler. He must be able to train leaders who will share his vision for the church and who will commit themselves to the work of the church. He continues to need good people-skills and to keep close contact with his people. The style of contact should begin to change from primarily face to face contact to greater use of the telephone. Here, and especially at the next stage, people who have always had the "ear" of the pastor may be concerned that he is becoming more distant, so the pastor needs to make this a gradual, but up-front, transition.

The church begins to draw more homesteaders at this stage, but from my experience they tend to be couples with no children or young children. Families with teenagers seem to want the "extras" of a larger church. They may also avoid the church of this size because they don't want the commitments that go along with the smaller church.

Since the crucial issue at this stage is the need to develop mature leadership and a congregation that owns the ministry of the church, the pastor will give special attention to identifying and utilizing the gifts found among his people. The quicker the majority of people find a ministry and begin working toward fulfilling the calling of the church, the more momentum the church will gain.

Fellowship continues to be an important feature at this stage and should be emphasized. However, there arises an increasing need to begin cell groups so that smaller groupings of people can experience the close fellowship that was present in the smaller stage. [†]

*Part II of this two-part article will consider the characteristics, needs, and strengths of congregations of 75 to 120 people and those of 120 to 200 attenders; offer suggestions for "surviving the plateau blues"; and look at "implications for The Brethren Church."*



### Burlington First Brethren Church Celebrates Centennial in October

**Burlington, Ind.** — Members of the First Brethren Church of Burlington celebrated the 100th anniversary of their congregation during the month of October.

The centennial celebration got under way on Sunday, October 2, when Rev. James R. Black began revival meetings. On the following Sunday, an 1888-style Communion service was held during the evening. Then on Wednesday, October 12, the Burlington Brethren enjoyed an ice cream social and family music festival.

The 100th anniversary activities concluded with a day-long celebration on Sunday, October 16. The morning service on this day included a look back and a look forward. Rev. Ronald L. Waters, pastor of the congregation, helped the congregation look backward, as he conducted worship as it might have been conducted during the 1800's. Cindi Stout guided the congregation in a look back at the history of the Burlington Church.

Dr. Charles Munson, directed the look forward, as he, in the role of denominational founder Elder Henry Holsinger, presented a message entitled "A Challenge to the Future."

Former pastors Rev. Wayne Swihart of Valparaiso, Ind., Rev. Gene Hollinger of Eaton, Ohio, and Rev. Ken Goss of Louisville, Ky., also participated in the worship service, as did

Rev. G. Bright Hanna, who was called to the pastoral ministry while attending the Burlington Church. Rick Voorhees was also recognized as having been called to the ministry while attending at Burlington.

The worship service was followed by a hog roast and carry-in dinner. The members and friends of the Burlington Church then spent the afternoon remembering and reflecting on days gone by. Approximately 245 people attended the day's activities,

including some descendants of the original families of the church.

The Burlington Church was organized in 1888 as the Salem Brethren Church by Elder R. R. Teeter, and a meeting house was built two miles south of Burlington. In 1910 the present building was constructed by the congregation and the name was changed to the Burlington Brethren Church. In 1965 an addition to the building was constructed, and various improvements have been made over the years. Membership at the end of 1987 was 141.

— reported by Alice Fellows; historical data added, taken from The Brethren Encyclopedia.



*The Burlington First Brethren Church building.*

### Children's Party at Oak Hill Focuses on Poor of the World

**Oak Hill, W. Va.** — A children's party held November 19 at the Oak Hill First Brethren Church gave the children of the Sunday school an opportunity to thank God for His bountiful blessings and a chance to remember the poor of the world.

The children came to the party dressed like children from other lands. They ate a meal of rice and bouillon (which they enjoyed eating with their fingers) and listened to a devotional about homelessness and hunger, presented by Mrs. Gene Skeldon. They also brought an offering for the hungry of the world, which was received and sent to the Brethren World Relief Board.

The idea for the party grew out of a

*Dressed up like children of other lands are (front row, l. to r.) Eddie Johnson, Timmy Johnson, Christopher Pennington,*



*Also attending the party but not in the picture were Brent and Joshua Watkins.*

*Photo by Jeanette Nuckels.*

Sunday school contest among the young people of the children's department. Leaders for this department are Gene Skeldon, assisted by Jeanette Nuckels. Teachers are Gene Skeldon

(two- and three-year olds), Amy Crouch and Brenda Fox (beginners), Suzanne Pennington (primary), and Margaret Watkins (middlers).

— reported by Gene Skeldon



## Ind. Brethren Thank Van Duynes For Service at Retreat Center

**North Manchester, Ind.** — Approximately 140 Brethren of the Indiana District gathered in the North Manchester First Brethren Church fellowship hall on Friday, November 18, to express their appreciation to Kenneth Van Duynes, his wife Sherry, and their family for nearly twelve years of service at the Shipshewana Brethren Retreat Center.

Mr. Van Duynes resigned as executive director of the retreat in October to take a position with InfoPro of Ashland, Ohio.

The appreciation program got under way with devotions by John Porte, congregational singing led by Rev. Jim Miller, and special music by Mike and Gloria Radcliff. Then "Roastmaster" Terry Voorhees presided over a "roast," which warmed hearts with humor and appreciation for the Van Duynes' years of ministry to the Indiana Brethren.

Other camp staff, campers, and friends who took part in the program included Al Grumbling, Ralph Gibson, John Long, Steve Barber, Gerri Ann Bargerhuff, Kevin Van Duynes, Troy Michael, and Rick Miller. In addition, Rev. Larry Baker, chairman of the Brethren Retreat ministry, presented the Van Duynes a love gift of over \$875, donated by the Indiana Brethren.

During his nearly 12 years as director of the Brethren Retreat Center, Van Duynes wore many hats. Some days he would be found in the office



*Kenneth Van Duynes*

writing letters, composing camp "promo" pieces, keeping financial rec-

ords, planning summer camp, or "firing up" the presses. At other times he might be found dismantling a tractor, moving water heaters, or fixing toilets. His job was always different from one day to the next.

While at Shipshewana, Van Duynes saw many of his dreams for the retreat become reality, little by little — new septic systems, a master well, more property purchased (four houses and many empty lots), a new dining hall and a new maintenance building constructed, and lots of remodeling done. Perhaps most important of all, he saw many lives influenced for Christ through the camping program, district conference, and the numerous retreats held on the grounds.

In addition to the recognition given the Van Duynes, Rev. Larry Baker also presented a certificate of appreciation and a gift certificate to Amelia ("Millie") Jones, who has retired from the retreat after seven years of excellent work as housekeeper.

— reported by Rev. Larry Baker

**Nappanee, Ind.** — Three husbands and wives — (l. to r.) Marvin and Becky Hochstetler, Mike and Sandy Mathews, and David and Janet Bush — were ordained Nov. 6 as Deacon Couples in the Nappanee First Brethren Church. Pastor Alvin Shiflett conducted the ordination service, assisted by Elder Robert Bischof of New Paris. Following the service the congregation enjoyed refreshments prepared by other members of the Deacon Ministry.



## Kenneth J. Madison Enters Active Duty as Chaplain

**Fort Knox, Ky.** — Rev. Kenneth J. Madison has entered active duty as a chaplain in the U.S. Army, serving at Ft. Knox.

Chaplain Madison, who served as pastor of the First Brethren Church of Kokomo, Ind., from June 1, 1986, to November 6, 1988, reported for duty at Ft. Knox on November 15. While pastoring the Kokomo Church, he also served as a chaplain candidate with the Indiana National Guard.

Chaplain Madison is a graduate of Fort Wayne (Ind.) Bible College (B.S. in pastoral ministry, 1983) and of Ashland Theological Seminary (M. Div., 1986). While in seminary he served in the Ohio National Guard and was

*Chaplain Kenneth Madison with wife Donna, and Samuel (far right, standing), Rachel, and Jared.*



commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. Chaplain Madison and his wife,

Donna, have three children, Samuel (9), Rachel (6), and Jared (5).



# Trip to the Holy Land Is a Dream Come True

By Enid Schrader

Psalms 37:4 states that the Lord will give those who delight in Him the desires of their hearts. One of the desires of my heart for many years has been to visit the Holy Land. On October 18, 1988, that desire was fulfilled.

My interest in taking such a trip grew deeper after I attended Seminary for a Day in January 1987. The "Living Vessels" workshop led by Dr. Kenneth Walther was excellent. It was at this workshop that I learned of opportunities to volunteer at archaeological digs. I pursued that avenue for several months, but my plans to make such a trip in 1987 went unfulfilled.

Even though I was unsuccessful in my attempts to work at an archaeological dig, I still had a desire to visit the land of the Bible. While doing some research, I learned of a work/study tour sponsored by the Biblical Archaeology Society. I made the necessary contacts and completed arrangements to become part of this tour.

From January to August 1988 I spent many hours planning for this trip, to be taken in October. But three months before the departure date, the trip was canceled.

Although it seemed as if the door was closed, I called the tour director to ask about other trips. She gave me the name and phone number of a pastor in New York with whom she had worked on other tours. He was taking a group to the Holy Land in October, about the same time as my canceled tour.

It is truly wonderful how the Lord brings people together. When I telephoned this pastor, whom I had never met, it was like talking with a dear friend. Soon we were making plans for me to meet his tour group at J.F.K. airport in New York City.

Some of my family and friends wondered at my traveling so far with a group of strangers. But when I met the tour group, I soon discovered that we were all brothers and sisters in the Lord. We had a good time visiting with one another as we waited to get through inspection at the airport and to board our Royal Jordanian 747 jet for the overnight flight to Amman, Jordan.

We spent two days in Jordan, where we visited Jerash and Mt. Nebo. We stood near the spot where Moses stood when he viewed the Promised Land. I could see the Dead Sea and the Jordan River. It was thrilling to stand at this spot and recall all the history that had taken place there.

On Friday we crossed the border into Israel. It was a long, two-hour process. We were all glad to get through, and several of us had pictures of the ceiling as proof that our cameras had passed inspection. Then it was on to Jericho, where I enjoyed a ride on a camel.

We learned that our guide, Hillel Geva, had a degree in archaeology. We visited several excava-

tions, where he taught us much.

One of the many highlights of the trip was our Sunday morning worship service on the Sea of Galilee. As I listened to the Scripture reading from Matthew's Gospel and realized that Jesus had calmed this very sea, I marveled that I was really in the land of the Bible. During the day, we visited several sites in Capernaum. But being on the boat on the Sea of Galilee, where Jesus and His disciples spent so many hours, was an experience I will remember for many years.

During our two days at the Sea of Galilee, we also visited Kursi, where Jesus healed the demon-possessed man. As we climbed the hills around the sea, I could understand why Jesus spent so many hours here. I could see Him walking up the slopes, with the crowds of people following after Him.

During our stay in northern Israel, we drove to the border of Lebanon and Syria. We saw part of the country that had recently been won by war. There had been much unrest in the area, but it was quiet the day we were there.

I was amazed at how quickly we could cross the country. We stopped at Mt. Carmel, where I heard again the passage from I Kings 18:20-46. As I viewed the scene, I knew without a doubt that our God is the Lord of all.

The last three days of the tour we spent in Jerusalem. Although I had spent many hours reading about the city and studying its archaeology, nothing quite prepared me for actually being there.

Our first stop was the Mt. of Olives.

(continued on next page)

Ms. Schrader is a member of the Hillcrest Brethren Church in Dayton, Ohio.

Below, view of Jerusalem from the Mt. of Olives. At right, a section of the Via Dolorosa.





# Conference at St. James Challenges Congregation's Vision for Missions

**St. James, Md.** — A missions conference held October 23 at the St. James Brethren Church renewed and challenged the congregation's vision for missions.

The theme, "You Will Be My Witnesses," based on Acts 1:8, was proclaimed by banners made by Sunday school classes, and reinforced by several guest speakers, who shared personal experiences and service opportunities.

During the Sunday school hour all classes from the fifth grade through adults were replaced by five simultaneous presentations. These were made by: (1) Paul and Terry Irving, who served for two years in Alberta, Canada, in a youth home, and Liz Hunsberger from the Mennonite Central Committee; (2) Cliff and Ann Rice, who spent a two-week vacation with Jungle Aviation and Radio Services in North Carolina; (3) John Buchanan, who served in Honduras on two different occasions; (4) Two representatives from Youth With a Mission, who gave a slide presentation; and (5) Cheryl Cline, who spent seven weeks in Yepima, Colombia, this past summer.

Rev. James R. Black, Executive Director of the Missionary Board, delivered the sermon during the morning worship service. This service began with a call to worship sung by Randy and Korby Moss. Slides from the Missionary Board were used to illustrate their song, entitled "Heavenly Father." Other special numbers during the service were presented by the

children's choir and the adult choir.

Following lunch (organized by Nancy Starliper and the social committee), Rev. Black showed highlights from a video of his Asian tour. This was followed by a repeat of the five presentations made during the Sunday school hour, with each person given the opportunity to attend a different presentation from the one he or she attended earlier.

The conference concluded with a brief service of choruses, two songs with a missionary/service theme sung by the adult choir, and a challenge to service presented by Rev. Black. Two individuals indicated a desire to serve in a missions capacity. In addition, \$500 was collected to support people from the St. James Church who may



*One of the dozen or more banners made by the children of the Sunday school for the missions conference.*

be called to short- or long-term mission service.

— reported by Rev. Tim Garner,  
Associate Pastor



*A group during the Sunday school hour listens to Cliff and Ann Rice (not shown) tell about their short-term service with Jungle Aviation and Radio Services.*

*(continued from previous page)*

What a beautiful sight! I felt a special excitement there that I experienced nowhere else. From this site we gazed at the city as we listened to our guide give us an account of its history.


My other outstanding memories of our visit to the "old city" were the Garden of Gethsemane and the western or "wailing" wall. I took the opportunity to pray at these very special sights.

On our last day we again did some traveling, driving south to the Dead Sea, Qumran, and on to Masada. I enjoyed floating on the Dead Sea. And the cable car ride up to the top of Masada and our visit there was another exciting event I will long remember.

Having experienced so much in eight days, I wondered what the final highlight would be. I was not disappointed, for our last stop was the Garden Tomb. Our guide here was a fellow believer, and you could feel his love for the Lord as he gave his presentation.

Following the tour of the garden and the viewing of the tomb, our group stayed for a time of worship. What a joy to sing "Up From the Grave He Arose" in a place very similar to the garden where Mary, James, and John witnessed the empty tomb!

They say that once you have visited the Holy Land, you are never the same. I believe that is true. I want to thank the Lord for the blessing of the trip, and I hope to return again.



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**Dr. Glenn L. Clayton**, president for many years of Ashland College, received a "Life Membership Award" December 12 from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education at its retiree recognition ceremony.

The Laymen's Organization of the Vinco Brethren Church, Mineral Point, Pa., held its annual

## In Memory

**Richard J. Godwin**, 61, December 12. Former pastor of the Pleasant View Brethren Church (Vandergrift, Pa.), and the Pittsburgh, Pa., First Brethren Church. Services by Rev. Keith Hensley, pastor of the Vandergrift Brethren Church, and Jamie Kridler.

**James William Marrs**, 72, December 3. Member since 1955 of the Falls City First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Curt Nies.

**Norma Hepner**, 68, December 2. Member of The Brethren Church of New Lebanon. Services by Pastor Robert Dillard.

## Weddings

**Barbara Jenkins** to **Ken Frizzell**, December 18, at the Walcrest Brethren Church; Pastor Dave Hoyt officiating. Members of the Walcrest Brethren Church.

**Jamie Brown** to **Dan Millington**, December 11, at the Walcrest Brethren Church; Pastor Dave Hoyt officiating. Members of the Walcrest Brethren Church.

**Tina Lorraine Shanholtz** to **J.D. Taylor**,

Christmas party in the church fellowship house Saturday evening, December 10th. Eighty-two men and ladies enjoyed a catered ham dinner and a program that included participation by the whole group.

**Mrs. Wadena G. Wertz**, formerly of Conemaugh, Pa., and active for many years, along with her late husband, Walter, in the Pennsylvania District camping program, now lives in Augusta, Ga. In recent correspondence with the editor she noted that when she moved to Georgia she had a 45-year-record of perfect Sunday school attendance, and she added, "Thank the Lord I've been able to keep it and not break my record." She attends Garden City Baptist Church in the Augusta area.

The 46th Annual Convention of National Religious Broadcasters

III, December 9, at the St. James Brethren Church; Pastor Brian H. Moore officiating. Members of the St. James Brethren Church.

**Sandra Kay Hall** to **Clebert Ashley**, December 3, at The Brethren Church of New Lebanon; Pastor Robert Dillard officiating. Bride a member of The Brethren Church of New Lebanon.

**Sandra Elaine McCleary** to **Millard Edward Kelbaugh**, December 3, at the St. James Brethren Church; Pastor Brian Moore officiating. Groom a member of the St. James Brethren Church.

**Carolyn Dowdy** to **Rev. Kenneth Solomon**, October 9, at the Sarasota First Brethren Church; Rev. E.H. Bearinger, father of the bride, officiating. Members of the Sarasota First Brethren Church.

## Membership Growth

**Milford**: 7 by baptism

**Oakville**: 2 by transfer

**Kokomo**: 3 by transfer

**Mt. Olive**: 4 by baptism, 3 by transfer

**Walcrest**: 3 by baptism, 1 by rededication

will be held January 28 - February 1 at the Sheraton Washington and the Omni Shoreham Hotels. Featured speakers and musicians at the convention will include Chuck Colson, Billy Kim, James Dobson, David Mains, Sandi Patti, Jerry Falwell, George Beverly Shea, Ben Kinchlow, Steve Green, Bill Bright, Dave Roevers, Jack Hayford, and others. The theme for the convention is "Jesus Christ Is Lord." Approximately 4,000 delegates are expected to attend, as well as thousands of visitors.

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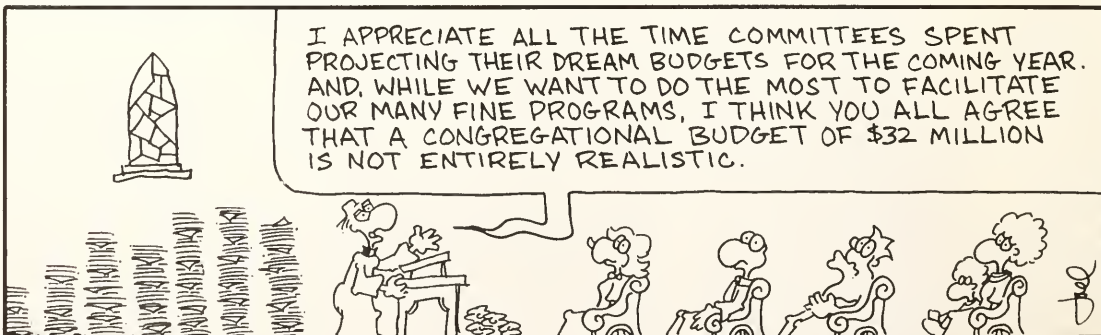
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## Pontius' Puddle



# Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

## NEW YEAR — NEW LIFE

At the beginning of each New Year, we often see a picture of a baby and an old man, like the ones below. The old man represents the old year, which is ending, and the baby represents the New Year, which is just beginning.

In the Bible (John chapter 3) Jesus told a man named Nicodemus that in order to be one of God's children, a person must be born again (become a baby again, like "Baby New Year"). Nicodemus was surprised. He asked, "How can an old man become a baby again?"

Jesus explained that he wasn't talking about a person's body, but the person's inner life — his or her spirit, heart, thoughts, attitudes toward God, and feelings toward others. Jesus said that when a person believes in Him (in Jesus), God's Holy Spirit makes that person new inside. He forgives the person the wrong things he or she has done and helps the person live a life pleasing to God. And the Holy Spirit keeps on making that person new inside.

Just as on every January first, "Old Man Old Year" turns into "Baby New Year," even so Jesus Christ gives us new life when we put out faith and trust in Him.

### An Important Message

Find the following words in the box and circle them to find a message. Words run across, up and down, and diagonally. When you are finished, color the drawings of "Baby New Year" and "Old Man Old Year." The words to circle are: 1. Give, 2. Happy, 3. Jesus, 4. Life, 5. New, 6. New, 7. Us, 8. Year. (Answer on page 3.)



Baby New Year



Old Man Old Year

See page 3 for an announcement about the new children's page contributor.



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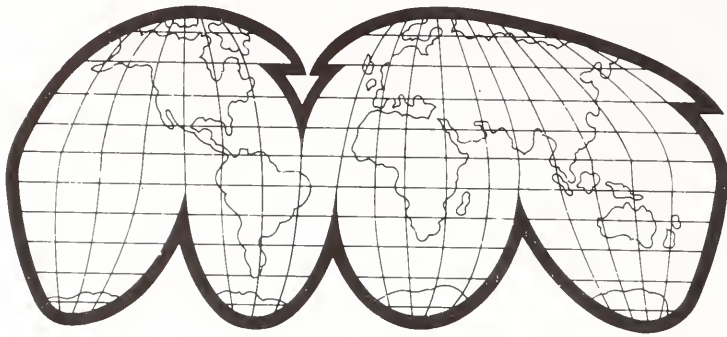
# THE BRETHREN **Evangelist**

FEBRUARY 1989





# Developing a Global Vision



by  
**John  
Maust**

## The Divine Ransom

**K**IDNAPPED! HOSTAGE! These are frequently used words and frightening realities on today's world scene.

About the time this column was written, two U.S. missionaries were kidnapped by presumed terrorists in southwestern Colombia. Roy Libby and Richard Grover of Gospel Missionary Union were taken by armed men who entered a worship service during a national church conference January 3 near Cali.

The abductors painted wall graffiti denouncing the extradition to the United States of alleged Colombian cocaine smugglers. But at this writing, the supposed narco-terrorists still hadn't identified themselves or announced their ransom demands.

Of course, kidnapping is nothing new in Colombia. There were at least 600 known kidnappings last year in this South American nation, and most were committed by leftist guerrillas who exacted astounding ransom fees from family members of the wealthy victims.

### A no-ransom policy

The kidnappers wouldn't get any money out of Gospel Missionary Union, however, since the mission agency has a no-ransom policy. Most evangelical agencies take the same stand.

"It may seem tough and even cruel [not to pay a kidnapped missionary's ransom]," observed GMU media director Abe Reddekopp.

"And yet to open the floodgates would cause much greater danger to all the missionaries."

I'll never forget my short stint at Spanish language school in Costa Rica in 1981. Colombia M-19 guerrillas had just kidnapped missionary Chet Bitterman of Wycliffe's Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL).

For days and days the kidnapping ordeal dragged on. Every morning at language school, little groups of future and current missionaries to Latin America huddled to pray for Bitterman's release.

### A tragic end

Wycliffe, like GMU, does not pay ransom or yield to kidnappers' demands. So, while it sought Bitterman's release, the agency would not heed M-19's demand that all SIL missionaries leave Colombia in exchange for the missionary's release. Finally, the kidnappers would wait no longer. After 48 days they killed their hostage.

Tragic as it was, Bitterman's death sparked an upsurge in missions. And dozens of committed Christian young people stepped forward to say they would take their fallen Christian comrade's place. (The Bitterman story is described in author Steve Estes' book, *Called to Die*, Zondervan.)

Of course, kidnappings and hostage crises are not limited to Latin America. We know full well about Beirut, Lebanon, and the abductions of Anglican envoy Terry Waite,

foreign correspondent Terry Anderson, and others.

Sometimes kidnappings are effected to make a political "statement." Other times, terrorists take hostages as leverage to demand the release of *other* hostages. Sometimes thugs kidnap people just for the money.

### Biblical parallel

It is not the intent of this column to examine all the reasons for and responses to worldwide terrorism. But the many kidnappings do remind us of an important spiritual truth that should encourage us to be better world Christians: We, too, were once held hostage — by sin.

We faced certain spiritual death, and there was no hope in sight. But God paid the ultimate price for our freedom by giving up His only Son, Jesus.

"The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many," says the Gospel of Matthew.

And God certainly didn't send Jesus because we were "good" or because we made ourselves "worth it."

There was a case in Lima, Peru, where criminals kidnapped the race-car driver son of a wealthy family and demanded \$5 million for his release. "If someone kidnapped me, would I be worth \$5 million?" I wondered at the time. Then I remembered that God had paid a much higher price for our freedom from sin, even though we hadn't made ourselves worthy of it.

The Apostle Peter writes, "For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers; but with the precious blood of Christ."

And the Apostle Paul adds, "You are not your own; you were bought with a price. Therefore, honor God with your body."

If we were chained up in some terrorist hideout, and somebody burst in to set us free, wouldn't we shout for joy?

So won't we be especially joyous remembering that Christ's death on the cross rescued us from an even worse fate — eternal spiritual death? And won't we be more motivated to serve Him? [†]

# THE BRETHREN Evangelist

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## About this issue:

Two longer-than-usual articles are included in this issue of the EVANGELIST, but both of them — "Catching Up With Our Heritage" by Jerry Flora and "Plateaus of Church Growth, and How to Get Off Them" by Dale Stoffer — are well worth the extra few minutes it will take to read them. Dr. Flora was given a standing ovation at the conclusion of his message when he presented it at General Conference last August.

By contrast, there is not much church news in this issue. This is not surprising, since most churches do not report their Christmas events (most churches are doing the same kinds of things), and January is a slow month for special events. Nevertheless, if newsworthy events are happening in your church, remember to send a report to the editor so that your good news can be shared with our Brethren family.

## Answers to Little Crusader Page:

The missing words are: hungry; thirsty; stranger; naked; sick; visited.

**Note:** This is the first "Little Crusader" page by Mrs. Erica Weidenhamer, who was introduced to EVANGELIST readers on the contents page of last month's issue.



# The "Nameless" Church of Guangzhou, China

By Ken Anderson

ARRIVING a half hour early doesn't necessarily assure you of a good seat at Guangzhou's nameless church. Guangzhou is the post-revolutionary name for Canton, China. The city has some sixty similar congregations, the cracker box sanctuary at 35 Da Mah Zhan being the largest, perhaps the largest in all of China.

Glancing at the myriad faces ever present when a meeting has been announced, one reads the history of China's last four decades.

"Yes, we have suffered much," one of the English-speaking members told me during my first visit. "Times were especially difficult under the Red Guard."

That is about as much as you will ever hear from these modern heroes of the faith.

"Our concern," my new friend continued, "is that we will be faithful to our wonderful Lord. He was ever faithful to us during the dark days. There is persecution now, but it is summer time compared to the terrible winters we once knew."

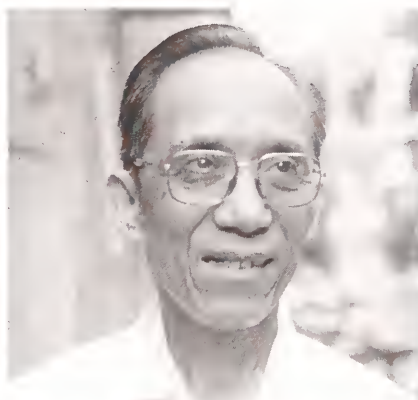
If you press for details, such believers will speak of the lessons they have learned, growth they could not have attained without suffering.

"Suffering is the way our Lord purifies His people," my friend said. He added reflectively, "The only other way is by our being completely obedient to His word."

True, the worshipers at 35 Da Mah Zhan share a common bond in

their experiences of suffering. But they share an even more predominant emotion — the joy of seeing God at work during the hard days of China's turmoil.

When missionaries were forced out of the country in 1949, believers numbered approximately one million. Today the tally runs somewhere between 40 and 60 million!



*Pastor Hin Go Lamb of Guangzhou, China*

"Oh, it was wonderful!" one Guangzhou mother attests. "Our loved ones were arrested and sent to prison. We never knew when the knock at the door would be heard. But the darker our circumstances, the brighter our faith and Christian experience. We supported each other. We wept when our brothers and sisters wept. But we had many reasons to rejoice. Even when our children were sent to indoctrination camps, they would come home telling of how real God had become. Atheism only fanned their faith."

"A wonderful blessing," said another, "was how so many of the ugly human traits disappeared. Gossip departed from our lips. We were

so occupied with praising the Lord and praying for our needs, we didn't have time to talk unkindly of others. Oh, we grew in those years! May God help us not to lose the spiritual progress we made!"

The people of Guangzhou's nameless church are a story in themselves. To understand the phenomena at 35 Da Mah Zhan, however, one must meet the flock's incredible shepherd, Pastor Hin Go Lamb.

"Hin means 'offer to,'" he will tell you within moments of your first meeting. "Go means 'Lamb of God.' So, you see, I am double Lamb!"

Born October 24, 1924, in Macau, the son of a Baptist pastor, Hin Go was surrounded by Christian influence and basic Bible teaching. To this he added two years at a Bible institute in Hong Kong.

Avidly interested in the English language, he taught conversational English as a tent-making occupation to finance his Christian ministry.

He began holding worship and teaching services at his place of residence. From 1950 into 1955, the work thrived, members consisting primarily of converts won from the language classes.

Then on September 14, 1955, Hin Go and his two co-workers were abruptly arrested. Bible teaching and preaching were considered counter-revolutionary.

For nearly a year and a half, Hin Go languished behind bars. He was held without bond, not formally charged.

Sentencing was to a dairy farm. The hours were merciless, the work often beyond the strength of his slight frame.

"I had no Bible," he relates, "but while in the Bible institute, I had memorized all of the epistles and

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*Mr. Anderson is the founder and president of Ken Anderson Films, which produces Christian films.*

*This article was offered simultaneously to a number of Christian magazines for publication. We are pleased to share it with our readers.*



*A typical worship group at the Guangzhou sanctuary. The church's membership grew from four to over one thousand in ten years.*

Ken Anderson Films photo.

Hebrews, fifteen of the Psalms and John 14 through 17. What a treasure God's word was to me, hidden in my heart!"

Then, near the close of his fifth year at the farm, a newly-arrested Baptist pastor arrived. Somehow he had been permitted to retain his copy of the New Testament.

"It was more wondrous to see," Hin Go recalls, "than if it had been instead the world's largest diamond!"

He asked permission to borrow the precious volume, and spent long sleepless hours copying the pages. Then a guard discovered what he was doing and reported the misconduct to authorities.

Without a trial, Hin Go was sentenced to fifteen years at extremely hard labor in a coal mine.

During those years both his wife and mother died without any notification being given him.

"Only the grace of God sustained me," he says.

## Return to Guangzhou

He returned to Guangzhou to make an amazing discovery. Although Red Guards had taken occupancy in the lower floor of 35 Da Mah Zhan, the second floor — his living quarters twenty-one years earlier — remained his property!

"I knew in that moment the Lord wanted me to resume my ministry. So I carefully advertised among students that I would be available for classes in conversational English."

During the first year, Hin Go Lamb established a congregation of four new believers, whom he carefully taught in Bible principles as well as methods of person-to-person evangelism.

## From four to over 1000

It was but the beginning. For, during the subsequent ten years, membership has swelled to over one thousand!

Needing space, he boldly designed and built a third floor, which now serves as the meeting hall. Using a closed-circuit television for overflow audiences in his living quarters on the second floor, approximately four hundred can jam pack into the facilities.

Even so it takes three sessions just to accommodate the normal Sunday worship service. Then, throughout the week, parishioners come for Bible study and evangelistic services.

An hour before each service, believers gather for prayer. It is a touch of heaven to hear them lift their voices in praise and petition.

At the announced time, the meeting — preaching or Bible study — gets underway with half an hour to an hour of singing. Pastor Lamb's messages and Bible studies are one hour and forty-five minutes in length. Minimum, that is! His hungry-hearted audience scarcely moves, seems readily willing to listen twice as long.

The audience consists of mul-

titudes of students, business and professional people, housewives.

Foreign visitors come frequently. Guest speakers have included Billy Graham, astronaut James Irwin, Hudson Taylor's great-grandson J. Hudson Taylor III, plus many others.

Legally, any assembly of Christians numbering more than thirty-five is required to register and come under the supervision of the Three Self Church, officially recognized by the government.

Three Self means self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating. Many of the Three Self congregations have deeply-committed and able pastors. Many others, however, stem from distinct roots of theological liberalism. And it is at this point where Pastor Hin Go Lamb balks.

"I love my country," he says. "While I have no fear whatever of going again to prison, I do not wish to be rebellious. But I must be completely free to preach the gospel and to teach the Scriptures as I understand them. I believe in the unity of believers, but with all my heart I oppose compromise."

The address, 35 Da Mah Zhong, is the church's only name. It is known across Guangzhou, not only as a meeting hall but as a spiritual launching platform. When I last visited Pastor Lamb, six house churches in other areas of the city had been established. Also, hundreds of tape cassettes go out to all areas of the country. Initial plans have been laid for the distribution of video cassettes.

## Strong opposition

Strong opposition faces this unique servant of the Lord. He has great need for prayer. He never knows, upon awakening, what day may be his last as a free citizen.

"But the Lord has given me complete victory over fear," he radiantly affirms. "I am in His hands. This ministry is in His hands. Many government officials see the value of Christian influence in the country. So while we may surely face troubles, we feel confident of victory."

Victory!

Come to think of it, that may be a good option, should Pastor Hin Go Lamb ever decide to give his "nameless" church a name! [†]



# Catching Up With Our Heritage

By Jerry Flora

ONCE UPON A TIME, so the story goes, an American Indian in the far west climbed high into the mountains, where he found an eagles' nest. In the nest was one egg. He took the egg, put it into the soft leather pouch that he wore over his shoulder, and very gently made his way down the mountain to the prairies where he lived. There on the prairies he slipped the egg into a nest of prairie chickens.

The time came when the eggs all hatched. There were a dozen prairie chickens and one large, strange-looking bird. The big bird learned to behave like all the other birds. He scratched for seeds and hunted for grasshoppers and looked for bugs and berries. And once in a while, as he grew to full adulthood, he'd stretch his enormous wings, look around, and fly a few feet off the ground, as it's the nature of prairie chickens to do. Then he'd plop down and resume searching for seeds, looking for grasshoppers, and going after bugs and berries.

Then one day he saw up in the sky the most beautiful bird he had ever seen. It had incredibly large, strong wings, and with these it floated on

the air currents, soaring and gliding and drifting and wheeling and sometimes diving. He looked up at that magnificent creature and said, "What is that?!"

The prairie chickens around him said, "That's an eagle, the king of birds. But don't you give it another thought, for you are just a prairie chicken." And so he searched for seeds and looked for grasshoppers and went after bugs and berries until eventually he died, thinking he was just a prairie chicken.

Now I ask you, Is that God's will for an eagle? Could anything like that be God's will for a person? Is something like that God's will for the church? Of course not!

The Lord God Almighty, who created the heavens and the earth, has made us with the spirit of eagles, and He wants us to soar. He doesn't want us to peck out our lives like a brood of prairie chickens.

In Matthew 9:35 — 10:8 Jesus sets out some things that are very important. If I could boil it all down into a single proposition, it would go like this: If The Brethren Church is going to make progress in its future, it will do so by catching up with its heritage from the past.

That heritage takes three forms, all of which are in this text. They are priorities, people, and programs.

My wife Julie and I had the opportunity the last several years to continue our research as we wrote the book *Faith and Fortitude*. We consulted every page of THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST from 1894 to the present and every page of the *Woman's Outlook* from 1912 to the present.

From that research we came away with one indelible conclusion — that in the generation from about 1880 to about 1920 The Brethren Church, for all the mistakes it made at the time, had a spirit of energy and vision that we must recapture. We are in the process of doing so, and that gives me a sense of faith and courage and expectancy for the future.

## Priorities

If The Brethren Church is going to move ahead in the future, it will do so by catching up with its heritage from the past — first in terms of priorities.

Our Lord, when He came to earth, had one overarching objective. That was to do the will of His Father in Heaven. That will took the form of preaching and teaching and healing. Those were Jesus' priorities.

Sometimes when you look at our denomination, you get the impression that we are a little denomination trying to do everything all the big denominations do. It seems that we might need some sense of direction, some sense of order.

Well, they had a sense of order in those days. In 1897 it went like this:

The three great important interests before the General Conference are the missionary interests, the educational interests, and the publishing interests, and these three are one, having the same end in view, the salvation of souls and the honor and glory of God's name on earth. Around these all other interests center, to these all other interests should be auxiliary. Our educational and publishing interests are but aids in carrying forward the great work for

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*Dr. Flora is professor of New Testament Theology at Ashland Theological Seminary.*

*This article is an edited transcription of a message Dr. Flora delivered at the 1988 General Conference. This was the fifth of six messages by Brethren elders on topics of significance to Brethren. The first four appeared in the last four issues of the EVANGELIST, and the final message will appear in next month's issue.*

***"If The Brethren Church is to move ahead into the future, it will do so by recapturing its heritage from the past, a heritage that involves priorities and people and programs all based upon the word of God."***

which the church was organized, equipped, and commissioned.

Do you have the image? It's the image of a triangle, with missions at the top and education and publishing at the other two corners, supporting it.

Let me give you another image. Julie and I have had the good fortune to see the Rose Parade live and up close on two different occasions. From curb side seats we watched as all the riders, all the marching units, all the bands, all the floats, all the pretty girls went by. But for me the best thing in the parade is the flying wedge of motorcycle policemen who lead it. I could go home after seeing them.

### **The church, a flying wedge**

The church is to be like those motorcycle policemen — a flying wedge of the people of God moving through the world. Not to parade itself; not to show off and entertain. But to recruit others to get off the curb and into the parade. And the point of that wedge out front is missions, and the two anchors in the corners are education and publishing. These are the priorities.

Jesus went through Galilee preaching and teaching and healing. And the early Brethren said, "Our priorities are missions and education and publishing." Put it in other words if you will: life and learning and literature.

In 1906 the Brethren put it like this:

The Brethren have a gospel name, and for a creed the gospel, which is also an ample discipline. In church government the Brethren apply the principles of cooperation found in the gospel. They have bishops or elders, deacons and deaconesses, pastors/evangelists, and other helpers, with the various gifts and graces of the Spirit, Christ being the head of all. The Brethren consider it their mission to give to the world an example of loving and complete obedience to Christ and His gospel. They have home and foreign missions, Sunday schools, Sisters

Societies, Christian Endeavor Societies, their college and seminary is located at Ashland, Ohio; they regard God's means as best to win His ends; and they invite everyone to join them in their great work.

Wow! I get goose pimples reading that. That's the vision of the Brethren in 1906. They had a sense of priorities — priorities like the Jesus who went about preaching and teaching and healing.

### **People**

In the text before us, there are at least two surprises. We are now ready for the first. When we read this passage, we usually stop at the point where it says, "... pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest" (Matt. 9:38, RSV). And we shut the book.

But we shut the book in the middle of the story, because no sooner had Jesus said this then, according to the text, He called to Himself His twelve disciples, whom He had just asked to pray, and He gave them authority to go out and to do everything that He was doing.

The surprise seems to be that there are times when we are God's answers to our own prayers, if we have eyes to see it. We want somehow to call down power from above, or bring in consultants from outside, when the power is within our own hands if we will use it.

I don't know that Peter and John were ready to go out at this time. Or Matthew and Thomas. I'm not sure that I would want people like that on my visitation team. Or Judas Iscariot and Simon the Zealot. People like that would just as soon kill one another. When you look at that group of twelve that Jesus had around Him, they aren't exactly the best people in the world. But they were the salt of the earth. And that's what the Lord God Almighty chooses to work with.

So surprise! We are the answers to our own prayers, if we have eyes to see it. The Brethren at the turn of the century began to see this, and

there were outstanding Brethren among them. Henry Holsinger, the writer and publisher; Stephen Bashor, the evangelist; I.D. Bowman, the city mission worker; J. Allen Miller, the quiet, gentle scholar; C.F. Yoder, the pioneer missionary. We have heard of all these Brethren. What we haven't heard too much about until recent years were some of the "Sistern," and we need to hear about them as well.

### **Women in ministry**

Within ten years of their founding, the Brethren did an amazing thing — they began to use women in the official ministry of the church. The first one so chosen was Professor Mary Sterling, who taught for a brief time on the faculty of Ashland College. At the age of 28, she founded the Woman's Missionary Society. Later she was called by the W.M.S. to become an ordained minister in The Brethren Church. She hesitated — seriously so, but eventually accepted the challenge.

Still later the Pennsylvania District appointed her District Evangelist for eastern Pennsylvania. This meant that she was to work at evangelizing the entire eastern half of the state. So she went from city to city, town to town, and mining village to mining village preaching the gospel, marrying, burying, baptizing, and doing it all.

Or there was Lora Grossnickle (later Lora Grossnickle Hedrick), who came from near St. James, Maryland. Lora was ordained in Ohio and pastored a church in Indiana (which today would be equivalent to the Ardmore Church). She was then elected president of the National Woman's Society, and on their behalf she began to travel. In one period of six months, she visited 77 churches and organized 38 new W.M.S. groups. She was such a powerful evangelist that at the close of one series of evangelistic services in the Hagerstown Church they nicknamed her the D.L. Moody of The Brethren Church. She preached



at General Conference (as did Rev. Mary Sterling) and served as secretary/treasurer of the Ministerial Association of The Brethren Church. She even wrote a booklet called *Woman's Divine Right to Preach the Gospel*, which the Brethren Publishing Company printed, advertised, and sold.

### A double-barreled ministry

There was another woman out in Iowa named Clara Myers Flora. (I suppose she is a relative, but I really don't know.) She was a Myers out of Pennsylvania who married a Flora out of the Midwest, and for more than 20 years Clara and her husband evangelized and preached and pastored in southern and central Iowa. At times they co-pastored churches. At other times Noah took one church and Clara took the other. There were times when she would go into a church and start a revival meeting and he would come in behind her and finish it, with the church getting double-barreled action — Clara for ten nights and Noah for ten nights. There were also times when she pastored churches of 200 members.

But one does not have to be ordained to perform that kind of service. Consider, for example, Mary Maud Billman. She first came to the attention of the denomination about the turn of the century down in the First Brethren Church of Dayton, Ohio. Her title at that church was assistant for education and church visitor, so she had some kind of staff position. Shortly after that she founded the National Sisterhood of Mary and Martha. Still later she was elected president of the National Woman's Missionary Society, and she began to travel from church to church on behalf of the women's societies. She tried to provide program materials for the various women's meetings and finally became so tired tapping them out on a typewriter in cold, dingy hotel rooms that she founded and edited the *Woman's Outlook* in order to provide news, information, and program materials for the women.

During her autumn years, Mary Billman was asked to reflect back over her pioneering activities on behalf of the Woman's Missionary Society in The Brethren Church. At

that time (1958), this woman — who was simply a lay person — said this:

What about the future? It will surely be different. Life is galloping along at a quicken pace. . . . Let us therefore adjust ourselves to new conditions. As in all walks of life, today we must live courageously and adventurously. Let us too adventure bravely through faith and the favor of the Holy Spirit to carry the torch onward and forward that we may hand it on to our daughters.

That is a marvelous sense of looking ahead. And I submit to you that if The Brethren Church is going to move ahead into the future, toward the year 2000, it will do so by recapturing something of its heritage from the past — the vision and the enthusiasm and the optimism of these people, who gave their all for the sake of the gospel in this church called Brethren.

But in order for women to come into their own in leadership in the denomination, two very difficult things must occur: Some men must relinquish some leadership; and some women must risk more leadership. The decision whether it's easier for men to relinquish or for women to risk is a decision that has to be made by each person who feels the call of God.

### Programs

Jesus certainly gave a surprise in this text when He said to His disciples, "Pray for workers," and in the next breath turned around and sent them out to do that very work. But there is another surprise in this text in verse 5. Jesus sent out His disciples, saying, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt. 10:5-6, RSV).

The second surprise is this, that not all commands are for all time. For you surely don't believe, any more than I do, that this text was meant to hold for all time. "Go to none of the Gentiles. Go to no city of the Samaritans. Evangelize only the lost sheep of the house of Israel." For in another eighteen chapters, Jesus is going to absolutely reverse this command and say, "Go to all the nations." And He will say in the beginning of the Book of Acts, "Be witnesses first in Jerusalem, then in

Judea, then in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."

Not all commands are for all times. It takes a great deal of work and discernment on our part to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit to understand exactly what is God's will for *certain* times and places and what is God's will for *all* times and places.

We are now talking about programs. Jesus gave His disciples a temporary, local program when He said to them, "Go only to the towns of Israel. Don't take any supplies with you. And whatever you do, don't accept any money as pay." There are very few of us today in the pastoral role who would feel that that command is for all times.

### Programs can change

There have to be reasons, then, why the commands in these verses were reversed on another occasion. What that says to me is this, that while priorities are fixed and people are permanent, programs can change. Times will come when we start new programs and end old programs.

Unfortunately, it's far more difficult to end an old program than it is to start a new one. We have so much attachment and so much invested that we find it very difficult to will the death of something we've been a part of. And yet there are times when programs need to change. Priorities stay; people are always there; but programs come and go.

In the early days of the Brethren, that is, of the Progressive Movement, how did they do it? Well, they tried all kinds of things. They formed boards for foreign missions and for home missions. We finally decided that wasn't a good idea and put them together into one board.

They tried to have a national evangelist — one gifted, talented elder who would stump the country on behalf of The Brethren Church, with all Brethren congregations contributing to his support. The man they chose was Stephen Bashor. It is estimated that in his career this man won somewhere between 10,000 and 20,000 people to Jesus Christ. There were times when Stephen Bashor preached to churches so full that he couldn't get to the platform. He had to walk on

the backs of the pews to get to the platform, and once there he stood in a little three-foot circle, with people all around him, and preached the gospel with that hammering style for which he was so very famous.

But the prospect of using Stephen Bashor as a national evangelist didn't work. For one thing, not all the churches collaborated. And for another, Bashor himself suffered enormous emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual burnout from which he never recovered.

The Brethren did other things in those days. They addressed the social concerns of their day. They wrote constantly about substance abuse in the forms of drinking beverage alcohol and of smoking, chewing, and snuffing tobacco. Scarcely a General Conference went by without some resolution on what we would today call substance abuse.

They editorialized often, and sometimes brought it up at General Conference, that women ought to have the right to vote and to participate in the political process of America.

As World War I loomed on the horizon, they wrote constantly and with extreme seriousness about the militarism that was going to destroy the world and that was already destroying the lives of so many in Europe.

## Planting churches

In the area of church planting, they started churches in the major cities of America. They went not only to the rural areas, the crossroads, the mining towns, and the small cities; they also went to Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., to Chicago and Montreal and Los Angeles. They even tried to start a church in Brooklyn. Somebody went so far as to do open-air preaching on Coney Island. As you may have guessed, it was one of the women!

Jesus said to His disciples, "Do not go to the Gentiles; do not go to the Samaritans; go only to the Jewish people"; and then a year later He reversed Himself and said, "Go to the Jewish people; go to the Samaritans; go to the world." Was He contradicting Himself? Absolutely not.

When you were a child, your parents said to you one day, "Don't eat your mashed potatoes with your fin-

gers. Eat them with your spoon." Then some time later those same parents said to you, "Don't eat your mashed potatoes with your spoon. Eat them with your fork." Is that a contradiction? Absolutely not. Only if one looks to the letter and not to the spirit is it a contradiction.

What this text says, among other things, is that priorities remain; people are permanent; but programs have to come and go. We have to see what works and find what we can do and do well, then stay with it.

## Encouraging one another

One thing the Brethren did and kept on doing in those days was to encourage one another. Their Conferences were gigantic pep rallies. The EVANGELIST every week carried letters of encouragement, and the editor took the role of head cheerleader for the denomination.

Consider these words from an 1897 editorial:

If you're inclined to be gloomy, despondent, discouraged, if you feel at times that everything is going to sticks, read all the church news in this issue and you will be heartily ashamed of yourself. Why should we be discouraged? Our work is moving forward grandly. New places are opening up for The Brethren Church. Calls are coming from many quarters asking for the plain simple gospel of Jesus. Our cause is prospering. Quit your whining! Up and doing. To the work with both hands, with heart and brain and all the powers you possess.

If that won't bolt you out of your recliner, I don't know what will. And this went on 50 weeks a year, year after year after year, as they encouraged one another.

Let me quote you a few paragraphs from an article that appeared in the EVANGELIST just two and one-half years ago.

The key human ingredient in all of this [the efforts of the people at that time] was encouragement. Brethren writers filled the pages of the EVANGELIST with it. They constantly worked at building up one another. They cheered and cajoled; they urged and exhorted. They took responsibility to be intentional in encouragement. Pastors were coaches, officers were cheerleaders, and conferences were pep rallies. In district and national conventions, in lay

and ministerial sessions, in Sunday schools and youth rallies, in WMS meetings and missionary weekends, they everlastingly encouraged one another.

**And it worked!** They mounted a campaign to endow and accredit Ashland College. They trained women and men for church leadership, encouraging the most promising to try for Ph.D. degrees. They carried through a drive to increase THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST's circulation. They began a missionary program at home and overseas. They established new churches and consolidated existing ones. In spite of all the obstacles before them at the outset, they grew to more than triple their original membership.

If they could do it by the grace of God, then by that same grace of the same God, we can do it too. If The Brethren Church is to move ahead into the future, it will do so by recapturing its heritage from the past, a heritage that involves priorities and people and programs all based upon the word of God.

## Feeling His pleasure

Eric Little, that great English athlete made famous by the biography and the movie *Chariots of Fire*, said on one occasion, "God made me to go fast. And when I run, I feel His pleasure."

It is my heart's desire that The Brethren Church will pick up speed, as it is now doing, and that we will run into the future, not ahead of God, but certainly not lagging behind. And when we do, we will feel His pleasure!

Once upon a time, so the story goes, an Indian in the far west climbed high into the mountains, and there he found an eagles' nest. Out of the nest he took the only egg and brought it down to the plains, where he put it into a nest of prairie chickens. The egg hatched and the eagle grew to adulthood and in time died, always thinking it was a prairie chicken.

Is that God's will for eagles? Does God want anything like that for persons? Is it God's will for churches to be like that? No! "... they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." [†]





# Plateaus of Church Growth, And How to Get Off Them Part II

By Dale R. Stoffer

Last month, in part one of this two-part series, Dr. Stoffer made some general observations about plateaus of church growth, then looked specifically at "The Awkward Stage" (churches of 0 to 40) and "The Organizing Stage" (churches of 40 to 75). In this article he examines two additional stages and offers practical applications of this material to The Brethren Church.

Dr. Stoffer is pastor of the Smoky Row Brethren Church in Columbus, Ohio, and serves as Church Planting Consultant for the Missionary Board of The Brethren Church.

## The Specializing and Building Stage: 75-120

At this stage the congregation is large enough to provide for the basic program of the church. The church has sufficient numbers to meet its budget and do some extras — community work, day care, full youth program. Given these characteristics, it is understandable that most churches are quite comfortable to remain at this size. Therefore, if a church is to grow beyond this stage, the congregation must develop four key commitments.

The *first commitment* is to recognize that ministry is not primarily the function of the pastor but that it belongs to all (a point that hopefully was learned in the previous stage). At this stage, however, the church must do something about it by continuing to expand its ministries in new areas. If the gifts of new people are not utilized (within six months of joining the congregation, according to church growth experts), newcomers will tend to leave the church.

What happens all too often at this

stage is that the church becomes so comfortable with covering the basics that the congregation makes no commitment to begin new ministries. Since new people find no place in which to serve, they are constantly exiting by the revolving door and never become functioning parts of the body. (Please excuse the mixed metaphor.) Continued growth depends upon a deliberate commitment by the church to keep on expanding its ministries by starting such programs as day care, work with senior citizens and the disabled, specialized youth ministries, and care groups for the divorced, bereaved, etc.

The *second crucial commitment* relates to the church building. Most churches initially build to accommodate a congregation of 100 to 140 people. Unless a church later expands its facilities, its growth will be limited by that building.

From this stage on, issues related to a church's philosophy of ministry enter in. Some may question whether a church needs to grow beyond the point at which it can meet its budget and provide for basic spiritual needs. This is a question that church members need to discuss thoroughly and on which they must arrive at a consensus before they make major commitments with regard to building. Both the pluses and the minuses of continued growth need to be carefully weighed.

It becomes increasingly important for the church to develop some form of cell groups as it grows through this stage. This is the *third crucial issue*. Towards the upper end of the

attendance figure (100 and above), it becomes more difficult for people in the church to know one another. Therefore, if the caring and sharing aspect of the church is to continue, it must be done in small groups. Failure to develop such cell groups will cause churches that emphasize fellowship (such as The Brethren Church) to plateau in this stage.

Churches that emphasize dynamic preaching or wide-ranging ministries or emotionalism (don't think that just because people experience an emotional high in a service that they have had fellowship in the sense of caring and sharing) are not as susceptible to plateauing here. Such pastor-centered, ministry-centered, or Spirit-centered approaches are not restricted by growing numbers. (Usually they are enhanced by them.)

The *fourth commitment* a church must make at this size is to modify its expectations of its pastor. One key area is visitation. If a church of this size expects its pastor to visit every regular church family once a year, that pastor will be limited in the amount of time he can spend in prospect visitation. The visitation of people already a part of the church is important, but it should be done increasingly by the deacons (as the Brethren used to do) or by other spiritually mature members. The pastor must be free to concentrate on prospect visitation, or the growth of the church will be hampered. The pastor should, however, maintain some kind of personal touch with his people through less demanding forms of contact — the phone, a

card, informal social gatherings.

Given the satisfaction that most Brethren churches feel in covering the basic ministries of the church, the size limitations of most buildings in the denomination, the small number of churches that have an effective cell group program, and the expectation many churches have that the pastor concentrate on church member visitation, is it any wonder that most Brethren churches fall into this size range?

It should be noted that one additional element tends to keep some Brethren churches from growing beyond this size — a radical form of congregationalism in which members think that the congregation must decide every question, no matter how small. If growth is to continue beyond the 75 to 120 stage, the congregation must entrust decision-making powers to its selected representatives (whom the members have elected, hopefully, because of their maturity and leadership).

In this stage the pastor needs gifts both in the areas of discipleship and administration. He is still primarily a shepherd (as opposed to a "rancher," to use Church Growth terminology) or a people-person. But the demands for greater delegation and coordination of new programs make it necessary that he also be a capable administrator. He must work well with various boards and committees and work patiently at molding consensus sensitively rather than trying to force it.

The people that tend to join the church at this stage are more and more the "homesteaders" — families looking for a church that covers the basics and in which they can put down their roots. The church may also begin to pick up some people who want nothing more than to "put their time in" on Sunday morning, though this type of person is more common in later stages.

### **The Pastor Exhaustion Stage: 120 to 200**

Growth through and beyond this stage is based upon the successful resolution of several issues described earlier: adequate buildings and parking, expanding ministries and lay involvement, a healthy cell group program. The two critical issues faced at this stage are the need

to hire additional staff and the reevaluation of the church's philosophy of ministry.

The matter of reconsidering the church's philosophy of ministry may be the more important issue, for the matter of additional staff directly hinges upon it. Churches that have

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***"Plateauing occurs for definite reasons. It is important to identify those reasons and to begin implementing steps to move the church into the next stage."***

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a strong fellowship-oriented ministry led by a people-person pastor who tries to maintain close, personal contact with his people and prefers not to delegate responsibility (because he'd rather do it himself) will seldom grow beyond this stage (120 to 200). What usually happens is that the pastor suffers burnout trying to keep all the bases covered. He doesn't have the time to spend in long-range planning and goal setting because he is kept running by all his responsibilities. The church may also wonder why it is failing to grow. Quite a few new people may be coming, but just as many may be leaving, because they find little opportunity for service and not much personal caring and sharing. As a result of its failure to grow, a critical attitude may develop in the church, which focuses on the pastor or results in political infighting among the various boards.

At this point it is absolutely necessary for a church to reconsider its philosophy of ministry if it is based upon a fellowship or *koinonia* model and lacks cell groups. (Note that the size of the church tends to be limited to the number of people you can casually know.) Such a church has several options. In order to maintain its fellowship orientation when it reaches 150 to 200 people, it could decide to start a daughter church. Or it could develop cell groups. On the other hand, the church could change its basic orientation to a model more amenable to larger numbers of people (such as a preaching/teaching or ministry or experiential model).

In the Brethren/Believers' Church

tradition, the model that fits best with our theology is the ministry model. With this model, the main dynamic of the church becomes ministry and service. But there also needs to be a strong cell group program in order to meet the need for fellowship and nurture.

If a church decides to continue to grow through this stage, it must provide additional staff, regardless of what option is selected above. Additional people should be hired based upon the philosophy of ministry agreed upon by the church. Obviously the skills needed in a senior pastor are quite different from those needed in a pastor in the previous stages. This pastor needs to have good administrative skills. He must be able to manage people well and to work with and through various boards and committees. (This is no place for a "pioneer" pastor.)

It is inevitable that the senior pastor will also be less accessible to his people. The church must recognize this. He will not know all his people on a first-name basis (though they will know him), and he must become more selective as to which "personal touch" ministries (weddings, funerals, counseling, visitation, etc.) he performs and which he delegates to his staff.

At this stage the church will continue to draw homesteaders and will also attract more people who want to get lost in a crowd. Unfortunately, it will attract few pioneers. The church has developed too structured an approach to ministry to make these people feel at home. Some pioneers may be attracted, however, if a church offers a variety of specialized and innovative ministries.

This is actually the last significant plateau a church must pass through. If the questions relating to philosophy of ministry, leadership style, and body life are adequately dealt with at this stage, the foundation will have been laid for continued growth. Though other factors such as location, capacity of the facilities, etc., will enter into growth potential, the most critical issues are the three listed above.

### **Surviving the Plateau Blues**

Nearly every congregation faces growth plateaus in its development.

*(continued on next page)*



## Plateaus of Church Growth

(continued from previous page)

Here are some suggestions for surviving these periods.

1. **Accept** the fact that plateaus are a part of the experience of any church. Don't start second-guessing yourself by looking for internal culprits for the lack of growth. Just as baseball and basketball players can think themselves into slumps, so can churches. Do not indulge in critical or negative thinking about one another and the church.

2. **Analyze** the reason for the slump based upon the dynamics suggested in these two articles. Plateauing occurs for definite reasons. It is important to identify those reasons and to begin implementing steps to move the church into the next stage. This involves risk, but staying on a plateau for too long can create a perception of the church both within the congregation and in the community that will be difficult to overcome.

3. **Attune** yourself to burnout in your people. In your desire to keep moving ahead, be aware of burnout in your leadership. Give people a rest not only from leadership positions (set a maximum number of years one can serve in a leadership position), but also in the calendar year. September, December, and March through May are busy times in the church year. Plan for lull times in between these busy periods. This counsel is especially important for smaller churches.

### Implications for The Brethren Church

On the basis of what I've said in these two articles, I would make several observations.

1. Most of our churches fall into the second and third stages. The reason for this is our strong emphasis on fellowship, people-oriented pastors, few churches with cell group programs, radical congregational polity, and satisfaction with providing the basic ministries of a church. None of these qualities are necessarily bad, but we should be self-conscious enough to recognize the reasons why our churches fall into these stages. A church that has these characteristics should have them as a *matter of choice* rather than by happenstance.

2. Because most of our pastors who grew up in Brethren churches have experienced the above model, we have very few pastors with the skills necessary to plant churches or to grow a church beyond 175 to 200. Either we need to retrain our pastors in these skills or we need to look for people outside our denomination with these skills. Our larger churches need to see the hiring of associate pastors as both a ministry to themselves and to the denomination in providing examples of and training for multiple staff positions.

3. The ministry model of church organization successfully implemented at Winding Waters and, since then, at numerous other Brethren churches offers an excellent organizational model for growing larger congregations. It likewise can provide opportunities for new people to be involved in ministry quickly.

4. As Brethren, we need to rethink several practices which seem to hinder growth. It is unrealistic to expect pastors not only to visit all prospects but also all regular attenders. Visitation of church members by deacons not only would free pastors to do more evangelism, but it would call deacons to be the spiritual leaders, which Scripture and our own Brethren heritage indicates they should be.

5. Brethren congregations should seriously consider beginning cell groups or home Bible studies. The fellowship and nurture needs of our people cannot be met adequately by Sunday services or the poorly attended midweek services at the church. Whether these cell groups are organized around Sunday school classes, deacon "flocks," or some other entity, they are necessary if a church is to continue to feed its people when a congregation grows much over 100.

6. There are also several important observations with regard to church planting. Lyle Schaller has suggested not starting a congregation until you have 150 people. (That is fine for Methodists, but is it possible for Brethren?) The reason he says this, though, is an excellent one. By starting with 150 people, a church bypasses the earlier, difficult stages and moves directly into the last major stage. As Brethren, we do

need to consider how to increase the size of our core groups so that we can at least bypass the first stage. Several means of doing this are telephone canvassing ("The Phone's For You" program), starting daughter churches, and loaning people from nearby congregations for a time.

7. We need to look for church planters with the gift of evangelism and who are people-oriented. But we also need to consider replacing them with pastors who have discipleship gifts when these churches move into the third stage. (Or we need to have a team ministry concept.) It is important that we be more discerning of the pastoral gifts needed at different stages of a church's life.

8. We must avoid creating barriers in the growth of new churches that can be avoided. A new church building should be large enough to move a young congregation well into stage three (75-120). If it is built only for stage two growth, it will not hold enough people to administer a "basic" program or to financially cover the cost of building, pastor, and program (not to mention land). Momentum is important to any small church, and the fewer obstacles it must hurdle the better.

9. Mature leadership is of vital importance to a home mission congregation, especially in view of the type of people who are generally drawn to a new work. Both the tentmaker program and loaning mature lay leadership from nearby churches are significant means for meeting this requirement. I would stress, however, that these Brethren "plants" must be flexible enough to be willing to try new forms to fulfill the mission of the church.

10. A home mission work should have in place from the first day a philosophy of ministry that will allow it to grow through the various stages without major revamping. Whenever a major change in philosophy occurs, it diverts attention and energy away from the forward thrust of the church. That is a major reason why such elements as deacon visitation, the ministry model, and cell groups or home Bible studies should be a part of the philosophy of ministry from the very beginning of our home mission works — even though they cannot be implemented immediately. [†]



# Jesus Is Lord

"... that in everything He might have the supremacy" (Col. 1:18).

By Moderator Kenneth L. Sullivan

**THE LORDSHIP** of Christ requires of us that we be committed to His church. This commitment is not just theoretical or doctrinal, but one which expresses itself concretely to a local congregation and to the denomination to which that local church belongs. Neither can be excluded. Christ inhabits His church at the denominational level just as truly as He indwells a local congregation or an individual.

## Christ indwells the church

When Paul wrote to the Ephesians, he spoke of the church being "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone" (Eph. 2:20\*). He added, referring to the local church at Ephesus, "... you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit" (Eph. 2:22). Paul wanted the Ephesians to understand that it is not just the church universal that is the dwelling place of the Lord; it was their local congregation as well.

In his first letter to Corinth, Paul said to the congregation, "Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?" (3:16). Paul was teaching that God guarantees His presence within the local church, existing in a

\*Quotations from the Bible are from the *New International Version*.

specific place and made up of real people.

In Acts 15 the Apostolic Church is gathered in Jerusalem for a council. Present were the Apostles, the church elders from Jerusalem and Antioch, and members from both congregations. In a letter to Antioch they wrote, "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us . . ." (Acts 15:28). Again we see God's Spirit inhabiting and directing God's church. Only now it is the church gathered as a council.

The church was not any less the church when it met as a larger assembly (which we label a council). Size or name or place makes no difference to God's Spirit. The church is still the church no matter where or when it meets, or how large the gathering, or what it is called. This may seem a silly point, until one considers some prevailing attitudes.

## Disparaging remarks

I have listened to Brethren speak disparagingly of their church, especially of the denomination. Often Brethren respond like Nathanael: "Can anything good come out of Ashland?" Some members conduct themselves as if they have no obligation to national ministries, policies, and personnel.

It's as if some believe that the domain of Christ extends no farther than themselves or their local

church, and for that reason national responsibilities can be ignored. It's as if people believe that Christ removes Himself from the church the moment we attach names to it such as "council," "General Conference," and "denomination."

Jesus does not abandon any aspect of His church. On the contrary, He has assured us of His continuing presence and trustworthy guidance. We have been grafted into the True Vine and draw our life and strength from Him. The Lord of the church is alive in the members of the church in the same way a vine is alive in its branches. Indeed, our Lord *is* the church; its members are incorporated into the life of its Lord.

Yes, the church is local, consisting of the many congregations that comprise the brotherhood of our denomination. It is also the many districts scattered across our country working to bring unity of purpose and ministry to larger groupings of churches. But just as importantly, it is also General Conference, composed of many boards and committees, auxiliaries and paid personnel, all seeking to be obedient to their Lord, all bound together by a common thread called "Brethren."

## All-encompassing loyalty

Any loyalty to our Lord's church must include all aspects and areas of His church. That loyalty must include national ministries, policy, and staff. In practical terms, we have committed ourselves to a corporate ministry that extends beyond the congregation. It is the church at work on the broad scale, doing together what a hundred or so people could not do by themselves. It is the combined effort of all Brethren churches aided by the indwelling Christ empowering us to take His gospel to the world.

It is one thing to offer constructive criticism when changes need to be made. It is quite another to belittle and depreciate what Christ calls His own. Christ inhabits His church. We are His church on the local, district, and national levels. There is no place in Christ's Kingdom for us to pick and choose our loyalties. Christ commands loyalty to His church, and He has not excluded any section of His church from the benefits of that loyalty. [†]



## **B** Brethren Benevolent Care

# The Benevolent Board Says, "Thank You, Brethren!"

By Rev. Doc Shank, President

**F**EBRUARY is the month to focus on the work and needs of the Benevolent Board. We begin by thanking you for your support and ask that you continue to remember the work in your giving.

Your gifts help in the support of Brethren Care in Ashland, Ohio, and the Brethren's Home in Flora, Indiana. The Board also provides monthly income to several retired pastors,

widows of pastors, and several who have spent years in Home and World Missions.

With the proposed reorganization approved at the 1988 General Conference and the divestiture of the two homes, the Board will embark on new and different projects. Your gifts will help determine the extent to which the Board will be able to serve. The need still exists, so again we ask for your continued help. [†]

## Reflecting on 1988 At Brethren Care

By Darrel Barnes, Administrator

**W**E were able to accomplish much in 1988 due to an improved occupancy rate throughout the year. This stability provided us the opportunity to upgrade areas in and around Brethren Care.

The first noticeable difference is in the dining area. The entire area has been renovated with new wallpaper, paint, hanging flowers, and decorative wreaths. These cosmetic changes, along with the new dining room tables and chairs purchased in 1987, have made a significant difference in this area.

Another area that received much attention this past year was our inner courtyard. In order to provide a secure area in which residents can leisurely enjoy the outdoors, we have put in additional sidewalks that encircle the perimeter of this area. A new 16-foot gazebo was centered in the area, which provides a shaded place in which to sit. Many residents are now able to enjoy the outdoors in a more relaxing manner.

Hot weather has always been a problem at Brethren Care due to the inability to keep doors open for added ventilation. Fire regulations have prohibited us from propping open key doors. But in 1988 we



*Resident Mark Baker, all dressed up for the annual Family Barbecue, waits in the newly redecorated dining area for the event to get underway.*

were able to address this problem by constructing screened-in enclosures around two doors leading into the courtyard area. This has dramatically helped our ventilation problem.

Finding and keeping professional nurses has become a critical problem recently, and the problem is projected to become even worse in the future. In an attempt to ad-

dress this nursing shortage, Brethren Care has established a Grant-in-Aid program for current employees interested in becoming licensed practical or registered nurses. We have been pleased to assist two employees in furthering their education in the nursing profession. After completion of the schooling, the applicant must guarantee two years service to

Brethren Care in lieu of repayment of the grant.

Only through the dedicated support of the staff have we been able to provide the very best care in the Ashland area at a reasonable cost. Our cost-containment efforts have been a large success, as evidenced

by the fact that we are one of the lowest cost nursing homes in the area.

The ongoing guidance and support of Brethren Care's Board of Trustees have been very much appreciated. Our Board of Trustees provide many hours of donated

service. To the following trustees I would like to express my sincerest appreciation: George Snyder (President), Dr. C. J. Thomason (Vice-President), Thomas L. Stoffer (Secretary/Treasurer), Dr. L. E. Lindower, Marvin Shonkwiler, and Dr. Glenn Clayton. A special note of appreciation is extended in memory of Dorothy Carpenter, who passed away November 11, 1988. Dorothy served as a trustee and Secretary/Treasurer to the Board for many years. She is missed by all who knew her. [†]



The new gazebo provides residents a pleasant place outdoors in which to relax.

### The Brethren's Home

*Due to a change in administrators (see "Update" article on page 17) and to a construction project, both of which are currently in progress at the Brethren's Home, no article about this facility is currently available. An article is planned for a later date.*

## Benevolent Board Support

By George Snyder, Treasurer

**M**ORE than one hundred ninety individuals benefited from your generous support of Benevolent Board ministries this past year. This includes the residents of The Brethren's Home at Flora, Ind.; of Brethren Care of Ashland, Ohio; and of Buckeye Apartments in Ashland. Also included are the beneficiaries of the Superannuated Ministers Fund. On behalf of all, we say a sincere "Thank you."

The Benevolent Board received gifts, bequests, and interest totaling \$20,739 and distributed \$12,176 for support of ministries, interest payments, and administrative expenses during 1988. This resulted in a net gain of \$8,563, which was used to retire two notes for funds borrowed during the seventies to support facilities development projects that were active at that time. We were also able to add \$4,233 to the Facilities Loan Fund, which assists our associated homes with low interest loans for capital projects.

Details of our 1988 benevolences and expenses are as follows:

Gifts to the Brethren's Home, Flora, Ind.	\$2,346	
Gifts to Brethren Care of Ashland, Ohio	3,039	
Benefits — Superannuated Ministers Fund	3,800	
Denominational Support	631	
Conference Gifts/Awards	450	
Total Benevolences		\$10,266

Interest on Notes Outstanding	847
Board Meeting and Travel	400
Bookkeeping, Administration, Promotion	663
Total Expense	1,910
<b>Grand Total for 1988</b>	<b>\$12,176</b>

I would like also to report briefly on two ministries that the board administers directly.

### The Superannuated Ministers Fund

During this past year, two from this group were called home to the Lord. A retired missionary couple has recently been added, upon recommendations from several concerned brethren. There is an ongoing need for this ministry.

### Buckeye Apartments

In January the Board reassumed management of Buckeye Apartments in Ashland. Major improvements, including interior painting, replacement of retainer walls, and a new roof, were completed during the summer and fall. These projects were funded from building depreciation reserves. Landscaping improvements were also made with a designated gift from Dr. and Mrs. James Richcreek, who live at Buckeye.

With an occupancy rate of 98 percent and voluntary help from friends and residents, we were able to operate without a subsidy for the year.

We sincerely appreciate your prayer support as well as your gifts to the various Board ministries. [†]





## A Man of Peace

By Harold E. Barnett, Peace Committee Chairman

SOME years ago it was my privilege to travel to the Holy Land during the Christmas season. When I first arrived, I experienced a little cultural and spiritual "shock," since I saw so little evidence of the celebration of the incarnation of God in Christ as a Babe of Bethlehem. It is so sad that in a nation of such strife and unrest, the Prince of Peace is not honored except by a small minority of believers. How desperately Israel needs the Messiah today!

Our tour group had an experience in Nazareth I'll never forget. Our bus approached the city from an elevated road overlooking the entire area. It was a dark day with a large black cloud over Nazareth. As we looked, a break in the cloud appeared at the horizon letting the rays of the setting sun bathe the city in light. It seemed symbolic. The dark days of God's judgment and wrath have long overshadowed the Jewish people due to their rebellion against God. There is still a terrible Day of God's wrath to come in the Tribulation Period.

But Jesus Christ will be accepted by the Jews during the Tribulation,

and His light will shine upon them, giving them hope and deliverance in that dark day. The Prince of Peace will finally come to His own in Israel.

As our bus came down into Nazareth, rain began to fall and the bus had a flat tire in front of the First Baptist Church of Nazareth. While it was being fixed, our group went into the unlocked church building and had a worship service. A Methodist led the singing, a Brethren (myself) played the piano, and a Baptist preached! At the close of this ecumenical service, we all gathered at the front of the church in an act of rededication to our Savior and Lord in the place where Jesus grew to manhood.

Then, all of a sudden, the door burst open and a little man literally "bounced" into the church! He raised his hands and exclaimed, "Praise the Lord for America!"

As we gathered round, he explained that he was a deacon of the church. As an Arab he had once been an unbeliever and was an enemy of Israel. He said that some Jews had tried to kill him. Then he became a naturalized citizen of Is-

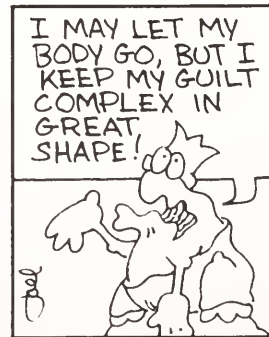
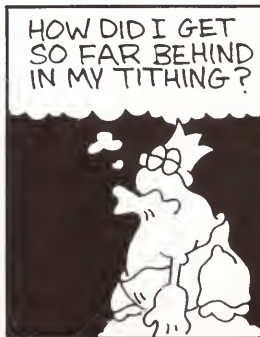
rael, and some of his hard-line Arab friends wanted to kill him. Still later he became a Christian, and it seemed that about everybody else wanted to kill him.

As this amazing little man enthusiastically testified of his love for the Messiah, I realized that here was the very personification of the peace that Jesus Christ brings to the heart and represents to the world. He is the only way by which Arab, Jew, East, West and all mankind can come together and live in peace. As the prophet so aptly said, "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked" (Isaiah 48:22).

Ultimately, peace cannot come through politics, United Nations, relief programs, disarmament, cultural exchange, or any approach that leaves Christ out. With Christ, the above approaches will take their rightful places. The best way to work for peace that lasts is through Christian missions, saving souls, and establishing churches. Otherwise, our efforts are futile. This was brought home to me in a powerful way one Christmas in Israel by a dynamic deacon of the First Baptist Church of Nazareth! [†]



### Pontius' Puddle



## “Reaching Your Potential” to be 1989 Pastors’ Conference Theme

**Marianna, Pa.** — “Reaching Your Potential” will be the theme of the 1989 Brethren Pastors’ Conference to be held April 11-13 at the Laurelville Mennonite Church Center near Mt. Pleasant, Pa.

The conference, which is being hosted by the Brethren pastors of the Pennsylvania District, will feature the CALM (Church Administration for Leadership and Management) team of Dr. Mary Ellen Drushal, Dr. Jerry Flora, and Dr. Doug Little. Sessions will be held for both pastors and their wives. Several other speakers, a worship time, and an Old-Fashioned Sing

will also be part of the program.

Cost for the conference is \$70 per person (\$140 per couple). A deposit of \$20 per person is requested by March 31, with the balance due upon arrival. Registration forms (which were included in the January 17 “Leadership Letter”) and a check for the deposit (made out to the National Association of Brethren Church Elders) should be sent to Rev. David Graetz, R.D. 1, Box 183A, Marianna, PA 15345.

Anyone desiring additional information about the conference should write Pastor Graetz at the above address or phone him at 412-267-3154.

## Gene Geaslen Resigns as Head of Brethren’s Home

**Flora, Ind.** — Gene A. Geaslen, administrator of the Brethren’s Home at Flora, Indiana, has resigned, effective February 17.

During Geaslen’s 14 years as administrator of the Home, the facility underwent numerous changes. When he came to the Home, it was a 46-bed health care facility plus several empty cottages. During his administration a 40-bed wing was added to the main facility and a 25-unit independent living complex, known as the Village, was completed.

The Home also underwent a change in its relationship to the community during Geaslen’s years there. “Helping to make the Home a part of the community instead of just a place at the edge of town has been rewarding,” Geaslen said.

Though leaving The Brethren’s Home, Geaslen plans to stay in the health care profession. He has accepted the position of administrator for a 100-bed health care facility in Fremont, Ohio, where he will begin working on February 20.

### Cheyenne, Wyo.

— The ladies of the Woman’s Missionary Society of the Cheyenne Brethren Church made a “friendship quilt,” which they gave to Pastor and Mrs. G. Emery Hurd as a Christmas gift. The quilt was presented to the Hurds (at left and right corners of the quilt in the picture) on Sunday evening, December 18, following the church’s Christmas program. The program featured a Christmas play, entitled “Broke for Christmas,” which was directed by Mrs. (Sue) Hurd and presented by Sunday school children and youth of the congregation.



Reported by Alice M. Therp.

## H.S. Jrs. and Srs. Invited to AC Brethren College Days

**Ashland, Ohio** — Brethren high school juniors and seniors are invited to the Ashland College campus March 3 and 4 for Brethren College Days.

Students will have the opportunity to attend classes, talk with faculty, staff, and students, and spend the night in a dorm room, hosted by Brethren or Hope Fellowship students. A registration fee of \$10.00 will cover the cost of food and lodging. For more information, call Professor Dr. Donald Rinehart (419-289-5112).

Brethren College Days will be held in conjunction with the A.C. Scholar Test, to be given on Saturday, March 4. Students who take this test will be competing for 33 scholarships ranging from \$10,000 to \$500.

This test is open to all high school seniors. Brethren students (seniors) who attend Brethren College Days will want to seriously consider taking the test. Current Brethren A.C. Scholars include Joe Gilmer (who received full tuition for four years), Keri Kurinski (who received \$1,000 renewable each year), and Beth (Naff) Maurer (\$1,000 renewable each year).

For more information about the A.C. Scholar Test, call the A.C. Admissions Office (419-289-5052).

## Historical Data Incorrect In Article about Burlington

*Some of the historical information included in the article about the centennial celebration of the Burlington First Brethren Church, which appeared on page 18 of the January EVANGELIST, was incor-*

*rect. Mrs. Cindi Stout, a member of the Burlington Church who has done extensive research on the history of the Burlington congregation, submits the following information about the founding and early years of the church.*

On October 17, 1883, a group of 13 people gathered and formed a Brethren church, the first Brethren congregation in that part of Indiana. It was called the Brethren Church at Burlington. One week later, on October 24, 1883, Elder Johnathan Swihart began a series of protracted meetings for the new congregation. The meetings were held at the Sugar Grove Union Church in the southwest corner of Howard County.

The Burlington congregation soon built its own meeting house, which was dedicated on September 5, 1886, and called Salem — a place of peace. The first deacons — Samuel Eikenberry, Abraham Gordon, and Willis Polk — were chosen on October 26, 1887, after a revival meeting held by Elder Swihart.

The present church building was built in Burlington (two miles north of Salem) in 1910 and dedicated on December 4th of that year.



From  
The



Grape  
Vine

**Southeastern District pastors and wives** held a holiday celebration December 16 at the Ramada Inn in Woodstock, Va. The group enjoyed a meal together as well as a time of fellowship. As a part of the fellowship, Bethlehem Pastor Pat Velanzon asked the pastors and wives a series of questions, such as how many children they had (a total of 28), how many churches they had pastored (a total of 45), what state they called home (Pennsylvania had the most), and what things they could do to make a pastor and family new to the district feel at home (a number of insightful suggestions were made).

**Rev. Ralph Gibson** was installed Sunday morning, January 22, as pastor of the Garber Brethren Church in Ashland, Ohio. Gibson comes to the church from the Meadow Crest Brethren Church in Ft. Wayne, Ind., where he pastored for eight years. A graduate of both Ashland College and Ashland Theological Seminary (M.Div., 1975), Gibson served as student pastor at the Garber Church while in seminary. Following graduation he served five years at the First Brethren Church in Roanoke, Ind., before going to Ft. Wayne.

**Rev. Kenneth Sullivan** became senior pastor of the Milledgeville, Ill., Brethren Church on February 1. A 1974 graduate of Ashland Theological Seminary, Sullivan has served the Walcrest (Mansfield, Ohio), Lathrop (Calif.), and most recently, Trinity (Canton, Ohio) Brethren Churches. He is also the current General Conference Moderator for The Brethren Church.

**Lodema Fasig**, a member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, celebrated her 103rd birthday on December 19. She was honored at a party with residents of Ashland Manor Nursing Home, where she has resided since May 1986.

The Central District will hold its annual "Davenport Conference" February 24 and 25. This year's confer-

ence will be held at Camp Abe Lincoln near Blue Grass, Iowa. Dr. Jerry Flora, professor of New Testament Theology at Ashland Theological Seminary, and his wife Julie will be the speakers.

The **Abe and Helen Glessner Scholarship** has been established at Ashland Theological Seminary to assist Brethren Students pursuing ministerial studies. Funds for the scholarship were given by the late Abe Glessner, an active member for many years in the First Brethren Church of Waterloo and in the Central District, and by his widow, Helen, also active in the Waterloo Church.

The late **Mr. and Mrs. Weir Tritch** have established an endowed scholarship in the amount of \$20,000 at Ashland Theological Seminary, with the interest to be awarded annually to seminary students preparing for the ministry. The Tritches were members of the Tucson, Ariz., First Brethren Church, and Mr. Tritch served as an Ashland College Trustee for many years. The Tritches' daughter, Julie (Flora), works at the ATS library, and Julie's husband Jerry is a professor at the seminary. Mrs. Herma Tritch died August 9, 1988, and Mr. Tritch passed away October 24, 1988.

**Wayne Lowman**, a member of the Linwood, Md., Brethren Church, has been named managing editor of *The Evening Sun*, a newspaper published in Hanover, Pa. Mr. Lowman is moderator of the Linwood congregation,

teaches the junior/senior high school class, and sings in the choir. He worked as a sports editor for several years before being named to his new position.

A **telephone campaign** has begun for the new Home Mission work being started by the Ohio District Mission Board in Springboro, Ohio. The first worship service is scheduled for March 5. Rev. Archie Nevins is the church planting pastor.

**Evan Bridenstine**, a member of the Smithville, Ohio, Brethren Church and instructor of theatre arts/speech communications at Ashland College, has won the Reality Theatre's playwrights contest. His play, "High Strung Quartet for Unstrung Voices," is to be performed in Columbus, Ohio, in February and is being optioned for productions in Washington, D.C., and off-broadway New York City.

**Dr. Juan Carlos Miranda**, a Brethren pastor and Supervisor of Hispanic Ministries for The Brethren Church, is serving as program coordinator for the 47th annual convention of the National Association of Evangelicals to be held March 7-9 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Columbus, Ohio. Evening speakers Paul A. Cedar, David A. Seamands, and Oswald Hoffmann will key on the convention theme, "Revive Your Church, O Lord," as they address the priority, purity, and purpose of the church. David R. Mains will stress a call to spiritual renewal in the morning biblical keynote sessions.

## In Memory

**Miriam Dobrucki**, 76, January 15. Member for 12 years of the South Bend First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Larry R. Baker.

**Blodwin Hildebrand**, 78, December 25. Member of the Vinco Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Carl Phillips.

**Mrs. Nora Mae Gochenour**, 83, December 22. Member since its beginning in 1918 of the Kimsey Run Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Bruce Shanholtz and Rev. Arland Schrock.

**Gladys Dickey**, 94, December 19. Member for 39 years of the South Bend First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Larry R. Baker.

**Rita M. Golby**, 79, December 14. Member for more than 60 years of the Johnstown Third Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Gerald Radcliff, who conducted a service prepared by Mrs. Golby in praise to the Lord for calling her home. In the Johnstown Third Church Mrs. Golby served as church organist for many years, taught many of the church children to play piano, taught Sunday school for a number

of years, was a Sisterhood patroness, youth advisor, and an active W.M.S. member. She was well-known in the Pennsylvania District and in the denomination as a whole, where she was particularly active in Sisterhood and the W.M.S.

**Raymond Shipe**, 78, October 15. Long-time member of the Mathias Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Jerry Fike, Rev. Borden Brady, and Rev. Moses Selveraj.

## Wedding

**Lisa Parks to Dan Cannon**, October 15, at the Milledgeville Brethren Church; Pastor Brad Hardesty officiating. Bride a member of the Milledgeville Brethren Church.

## Membership Growth

**Milford:** 1 by baptism

**Ardmore:** 2 by baptism

**Milledgeville:** 5 by baptism

**Mathias:** 2 by baptism, 2 by transfer

**Warsaw:** 3 by baptism, 7 by transfer

**St. Luke:** 15 by baptism, 4 by transfer

# Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

## WHO WAS ST. VALENTINE?

Many people celebrate February 14 as St. Valentine's Day. But did you know that there was a **real** Valentine? St. Valentine was a man of great faith who lived about 250 years after Jesus. He was put into prison because of his faith, and because he refused to stop teaching and preaching about Jesus, he was put to death. The night before he was to be killed, he wrote a note to the prison keeper's daughter thanking her for being kind to him. She had visited him, and he wanted her to know how much this meant to him. He signed his note, "Your Valentine."



### FILLING IN MISSING WORDS

Find Matthew 25:35-36, 40 in your Bible.

Use these verses to help you fill in the missing words.

"Then the King will say to the people on his right, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father! Come and possess the kingdom which has been prepared for you since the creation of the world.

I WAS \_\_\_\_\_ AND YOU FED ME,  
I WAS \_\_\_\_\_ AND YOU GAVE ME A DRINK;  
I WAS A \_\_\_\_\_ AND YOU RECEIVED ME IN YOUR HOMES,  
I WAS \_\_\_\_\_ AND YOU CLOTHED ME;  
I WAS \_\_\_\_\_ AND YOU TOOK CARE OF ME,  
I WAS IN PRISON AND YOU \_\_\_\_\_ ME.'

... 'I tell you, whenever you did these things for one of the least important of these brothers of mine, you did it for me.'"

LOVE IS BEING THERE WHEN SOMEONE NEEDS YOU!



### MAKING A LITTLE LOVE NOTE

Valentines or "love notes" should not just be for once a year. Moms, dads, and kids need them when they are having bad days. Grandmas and Grandpas need them when they are feeling a little lonely. Friends need them, and strangers need them too. So . . .

1. Find a colored or plain piece of paper.
2. Fold your piece of paper in half.
3. Make a pretty picture or design on the front.
4. Inside the folded paper write a few words. It doesn't have to be fancy words. Just "I Love you" is good, or "I love you because you \_\_\_\_\_."

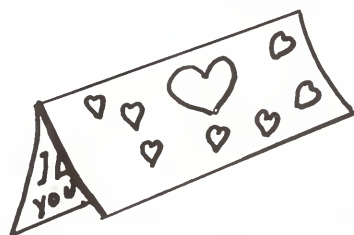
Stick your note to the bathroom mirror, put it on the person's pillow, in a lunch box, or on the steering wheel of the car — wherever your "loved one" is sure to find it.

### HELPING PRISONERS

PRISON FELLOWSHIP is the name of a group of Christians who are concerned with loving prisoners and their families. It was started by a man named Chuck Colson, who became a Christian while he was in prison. He saw how much the prisoners needed people to care about them. He also saw how much the prisoners' families needed people to love them and care about how hard it was missing their dad or mom in prison.

PRISON FELLOWSHIP has church services for prisoners. They also find pen pals and visitors for the prisoners. If your family would like to "adopt" a prisoner to write to or visit, you can write as a family to:

PRISON FELLOWSHIP  
P.O. BOX 17500  
WASHINGTON, DC  
20041-0500





# BRETHREN BOOKS AND TRACTS

Available from  
**The Brethren Publishing Company**

If you would like to know more about the history and doctrines of The Brethren Church, or if you want to share information about our church with others, the Brethren Publishing Company has several publications available to help you. Following is a price list with a brief description of each publication.

## BOOKS

**Meet the Brethren**, Donald F. Durnbaugh editor, 120 pp., \$2.95.

A chapter on Brethren history from 1708 to 1883 followed by chapters describing each of the five Brethren bodies (Church of the Brethren, Grace Brethren, The Brethren Church, Dunkard Brethren, Old German Baptist Brethren).

**History of The Brethren Church**, by Albert T. Ronk, 524 pp., \$5.00.

A thorough study of the background and history of the life, thought, and mission of The Brethren Church from its beginnings to 1968.

**History of Brethren Missionary Movements**, by Albert T. Ronk, 152 pp., \$1.50.

A study of Brethren missions from the colonial period to recent years.

**Our Church Guidebook**, by Albert T. Ronk, 155 pp., \$.75.

A handbook describing the responsibilities of the various officers, boards, and committees of a local Brethren church.

**A Search for Truth**, by Albert T. Ronk, 175 pp., \$.75.

The autobiography of one of The Brethren Church's leading historians, chronicling his 80-year search and what he discovered.

**Christian Doctrine — Lectures and Sermons**, by J. Allen Miller, 346 pp., \$1.75.

A posthumous publication of lectures and sermons by this Brethren scholar and former president of Ashland College and dean of Ashland Theological Seminary.

**Ministerial Examining Procedures of The Brethren Church**, adopted by the National Ministerial Association, 30 pp., \$1.25.

Procedures for calling, licensing, ordaining, and disciplining pastors; also pastoral ethics and pastoral-congregational relations.

**The Brethren Pastor's Handbook**, 122 pp., \$3.00.

A guidebook for pastors that includes orders and forms for various services and activities in the church.

## BOOKLETS

**A Centennial Statement**, 10 pp., \$1.00 each; \$.75 each for ten or more; \$.50 each for 100 or more.

A booklet published during The Brethren Church's centennial year that defines the beliefs and practices of the denomination.

**Lessons in Brethren Doctrine**, by several Brethren writers, 67 pp., \$.75.

Thirteen lessons on Brethren teachings and practices. Suitable for use in an adult Sunday school class or other study groups.

## TRACTS

**The Brethren Church**, \$.15 each; \$7.00 per hundred.

A tract that gives a brief introduction to the history, lifestyle, ministry, and faith of The Brethren Church. Suitable for giving to visitors or to use in visitation. (Imprinting available).

**The Brethren Church**, by Albert T. Ronk, 16 pp., 10 cents each; 85 cents per dozen; \$6.50 per hundred.

"A brief treatise on the teachings, beliefs and practices of the Brethren."

**The Office and Duties of Deacons and Deaconesses**, by John F. Locke, 30 cents a dozen; \$2.00 per hundred.

A tract prepared for new deacons and deaconesses to explain their position and responsibilities.

**The Message of the Brethren Ministry**, by the National Ministerial Association, 10 cents each; \$1.00 per dozen; \$4.00 per hundred.

**The Holy Spirit at Work**, by Percy C. Miller, 10 cents each; 85 cents a dozen; \$6.50 per hundred.

A look at the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of individual Christians and in the church.

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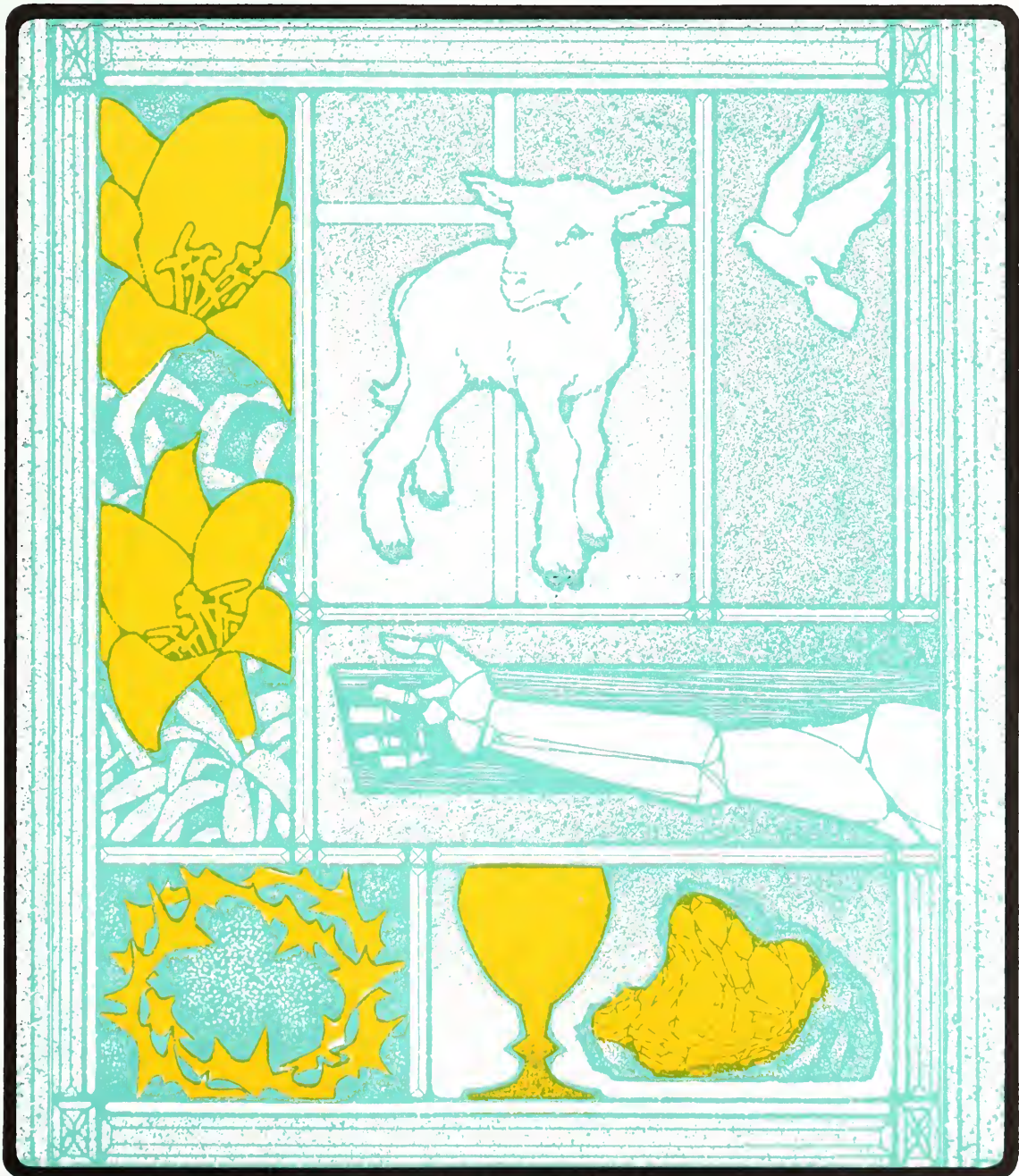
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# THE BRETHREN Evangelist

MARCH 1989







# the salt shaker

by Alvin Shifflett

## No Turning Back

THE TIME OF YEAR when the Israelites crossed the Jordan River was probably April or May. This was the season when the Jordan would have been in the very pride of its fullness and strength. The snows of Mt. Hermon had melted and the water was pouring down into the valley, swelling the Jordan and causing it to overflow its banks as it plunged recklessly down to the Dead Sea.

### A formidable obstacle

Joshua and the People of Israel faced a formidable obstacle, for the flooded Jordan was nature at its worst. To the Canaanites, observing the Israelites on the far bank, however, the flooded Jordan was nature at its best. But the irony of this story is that nature is never on the side of doomed people, even if it appears to be so, as the Canaanites soon discovered.

Nature has a clever way of disguising itself so as often to portray itself as protecting doomed and evil people. We must never forget, however, appearances notwithstanding, that the whole earth is bound and determined in the long run to cast out the wicked and rebellious before God.

Joshua knew that. He had witnessed it in the exodus from Egypt and during the forty arduous years in the wilderness. Now the time had finally come for the people of Israel to claim their heritage. Faith would take them across this final barrier and strike fear in the hearts of all

those living in the land. The Canaanites would learn that their most fancied security, the strongest of defenses — walled cities, flooded rivers, chariots of iron (even space shields) — would not spare those

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***“We must never forget . . . that the whole earth is bound and determined in the long run to cast out the wicked and rebellious before God.”***

---

who ignore and sneer at God. When the harvest is ready, God always makes hay!

It is interesting that in Holy Writ it is easy to overlook some of the finer gems of inspiration. Our materialistic eyes are drawn to the raging muddy waters, to the walled cities, and to the Cecil B. De Mille-like crossings, and we miss the golden nuggets in our pathway.

### A golden nugget

The golden nugget in this passage is found in Joshua 4:18: “And the priests came up out of the river carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD. No sooner had they set their feet on the dry ground than the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and ran at flood stage as before” (NIV).

Did you see it? Did you catch the glorious implication here? The writer soars to the height of inspiration through what he implies. What he

has told us, without saying it point-blank, is that once the Israelites had crossed the Jordan, there was no way of retreat: “. . . the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and ran at flood stage as before.”

No sooner had the Israelites crossed through the Jordan than the

---

***“We must be committed to the overthrow of Satan’s wicked kingdom or die. There is no turning back. Advance is the only option.”***

---

river closed in behind them. Joshua and the nation was now firmly locked into their task. To retreat was to drown!

One might think that the pagans now had the Israelites where they wanted them — between the devil and the deep muddy Jordan. Why not attack them and drive them into the river from whence they came? But put yourself in the Canaanites’ place. Would you attack someone for whom nature had just let down one of its most formidable defenses?

Now put yourself in Joshua’s place. You have only one way to go — forward. You can’t go back, for God never promised that He would reopen the Jordan.

### Advance the only option

The time comes in everyone’s Christian life when we are bound to this holy work of taking the devil’s citadel. We must be committed to the overthrow of Satan’s wicked kingdom or die. There is no turning back. Advance is the only option. There is no Plan B, no alternative.

Scripture is clear on this. The Christian can never turn and run. The challenge is repeated time and time again: “Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong” (I Cor. 16:13, NIV).

Once you’ve crossed your flooded Jordan, don’t ever plan to go back. Don’t even think about it. Does a grown person want to become a two-year-old again? But ask a two-year-old if he or she wouldn’t like to be an adult. You see, once you have taken a giant step of faith, you can never take baby steps again. [†]

THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST  
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Images of Holy Week, from the Last Supper (represented by the Bread and the Cup), through the resurrection (represented by the lilies). The lamb superimposed on the cross reminds us that Jesus was the Lamb of God slain to take away the sin of the world.

**In this issue:** This issue contains the final message of the six that were presented by Brethren Elders at General Conference last August. These six messages on topics of particular significance to Brethren were presented in recognition of the fact that the 1988 gathering was the 100th General Conference of the Brethren Church. Many readers may want to save these six articles for future rereading.

### Answers to Little Crusader Page:

"Friends Who Saw Jesus After the Resurrection": See word box at right.

MAR CLEOPAS UDTHOHSN  
SAPMSE MORLKT HNAUPM  
FRINATHANAEL MARYPE  
PETER RYLP MOL THOMAS  
POLMASALOMEPASTHAN



# Adoption as an Option

## Part II

By Erica  
Weidenhamer

*In part one of this two-part series, Mrs. Weidenhamer challenged Brethren families to prayerfully consider God's call to adopt "hard-to-place" children. That article appeared in the November 1988 issue of the EVANGELIST. In this article, she tells about her and her husband's experience adopting two young boys.*

### A Calling

I FELT a distinct calling to adopt children from the time I was in high school. It was not that I heard voices or had dreams, but rather I knew it with great certainty from deep within. It was something that just "was."

When I first met Jeff, who later became my husband, we talked about this, and he was very open to adoption as the way of growing a family. He also had always wanted to adopt children. So when we were married, we planned that we would adopt.

We had just begun to carry through on these plans with an initial meeting with the state adoption service in Ohio, when we discovered that I was pregnant. Soon Emily was born to us as a gift from God. This, however, did not dampen our enthusiasm for adopting. It only delayed it until Emily was older.

*Mrs. Weidenhamer is a member of the St. Petersburg, Fla., Brethren Church, and current contributor of the "Little Crusader" page to the EVANGELIST.*

*This article was written at the request of the General Conference Social Concerns Committee.*



### A Start

When Emily was 2½ years old, we again felt it was time to explore adoption possibilities. By this time we were living in Florida. We visited a private adoption agency but were told that because we were open to adoptive children of various ages, races, and health needs, we should contact the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (HRS) of the State of Florida, which could better help us. Private agencies usually handle only healthy white newborns. The waiting period for this group of adoptive children, which are in high demand, was from three to five years.

It seemed to us that there were plenty of people willing to adopt healthy white babies and that they did not need us. What interested us were the children for whom HRS had difficulty finding parents because of the child's health, race, family background, or because they needed to be placed in an adoptive home with their siblings. We contacted the HRS and had our first interview December 26, 1984.

HRS personnel visited our home for interviews several times, re-

quested our financial records, and had us write our autobiographies. We also were fingerprinted so that we could be checked for a criminal record, particularly any crimes dealing with children. We talked about what we could accept in a child and filled out a checklist on what we could or could not deal with.

*Could we deal with a child with cerebral palsy?*

*Could we deal with a child who lies?*

*Could we deal with a child with severe emotional problems stemming from sexual abuse?*

*Could we deal with a child with a mild heart defect?*

*Could we deal with a sibling group of children?*

We found the checklist to be very specific and very helpful. It enabled us to sort out our feelings

***"It seemed to us that there were plenty of people willing to adopt healthy white babies and that they did not need us. What interested us were the children for whom [the adoption agency] had difficulty finding parents. . . ."***

on what we could or could not handle. The social worker helped us to see that all of us, no matter who we are, have some things that would "get" to us because of our upbringing and childhoods, expectations and experiences. She told us, for example, of one man who found it particularly difficult to deal with a child who lied. Although he knew intellectually that this child lied because of an emotional problem, at the gut level he could not accept and tolerate any lying ever. It is better to know these things about ourselves ahead of time so that we can be matched to a child whom we can easily accept.

### **A Dream**

Toward the end of February 1985 Jeff and I both dreamed on the same night that we would have three children. At the time it was quite a shock. We really had not been considering adopting more than one child at a time. When we woke up and told each other what we had dreamed, our response was "Ah-oh!" We had a sense that God was preparing us for a larger family than the one we had been expecting.

The social workers visited us in late May. Their first question was, "Would you consider adopting two children, brothers?" Jeff and I looked at each other and our mouths

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***"Since we felt that God had called us to [adopt children], we felt that He would certainly provide for our adjustment to this calling as well."***

---

dropped open. We related our dreams to the social workers, who told us that they have heard many stories of such "Providential coincidences" in their years of child placement.

We learned that David was born February 25, near to or possibly on the night we had our dreams. Prior to David's birth, his mother had had no interest in letting her first son, Joel (1½ years older than David) be adopted. He had been in foster care from birth. Then during her pregnancy with David, she made arrangements for him, likewise, to be placed in foster care at birth.

She had no intention of relinquishing her parental rights to the two boys so that they could be adopted, and no intentions of caring for them herself. Perhaps she hoped that some day she would be able to be their mother in the truest sense of that word, but in the meantime the boys would be in a kind of limbo, without a real, permanent family.

But something, or Someone, changed her mind after David's birth. She suddenly decided to sign the papers relinquishing her parental rights. Had she not made this decision, the boys would have continued in foster care for a few more years before the social workers could have gone to the court system and requested that a judge sever their mother's rights. The process of severing parental rights is a lengthy one and could have gone on for two more years, adding yet more time that the boys would have been in the limbo of not having a permanent family.

### **A Scare**

The night before the boys were to be placed in our home (July 19, 1985), we went to the foster home to visit them. It was obvious that they were well cared for and loved by their foster family. We later heard that this is unusual, because so many foster families are overworked, underpaid, and (because of the great need for good foster parents) overcrowded.

Both boys were a bit shy with us at first but warmed up quickly. When Jeff put David (then five months old) to bed, he discovered a strange lump in David's arm. At first he thought, "What a bicep!" But then he realized that this was no muscle.

Both boys had been examined by their pediatrician only a few days earlier. This seemingly sudden appearance of a large (2½ inch by 3 inch) tumor was seen as a very bad sign by his pediatrician, who



A "Happy Adoption Party" for the Weidenhamer family given by Phil and Jean Lersch and Bonnie Munson shortly after the July 1985 arrival of Joel and David.



***“In our hearts and our minds, God had planned for us to be together, and He made our family a reality. It hardly seems possible that we could ever have truly lived without one another.”***

recommended immediate surgery and a biopsy of the tumor. So the following evening the boys came to live with us, and three days later David was admitted to the children's hospital for surgery.

### **David's Adjustment**

Thankfully, the tumor was benign, but the trauma of the hospital stay plus the stress of moving to a new family all at once was almost too much for David. Before his surgery, he had to be denied his formula for over 10 hours, the last two of which he spent screaming and flailing at me.

For a few months after the operation, the fear that we would not feed him caused him to wake up two to three times every night. He would scream and cry hysterically, and *only* being fed would calm him. But after we proved to him that we would provide for all his needs, he settled in and was quite a happy and energetic baby.

### **Joel's Adjustment**

Joel (1 $\frac{3}{4}$  years old) found this new household difficult to adjust to as well. He had formed strong bonds with his foster family and had been their “baby.” In that first week, because of David's surgery, he was forced to take a back seat as the focus of attention, when he needed so much attention in order to adjust.

We worried about him. He seemed withdrawn and didn't speak much. His language skills seemed to regress, and he became more “picky” about his eating. But he did smile a great deal.

As with David, we tried to show Joel that we would provide all his needs. Joel's main concern was not food, but rather whether these new parents could be trusted to give him the love, attention, and strokes he was used to getting and which he needed so much. By the time his second birthday came, a party celebration “just for him”

cemented his growing love for and trust in us.

### **Emily's Adjustment**

Emily, having turned three, was a bit “put out” by having two new brothers. She had put in her “order” for *one sister* and instead had received a “whole 'nother thing.”



*A picture of the Weidenhamer family taken in November 1988.*

Hadn't we listened to what she wanted? She became quite aggressive, not towards the boys, but towards a new girl that we began to care for during the day. These new brothers took a lot of Mom and Dad's time when she was used to having them all to herself.

Emily's adjustment began with a heart-to-heart talk with her dad, who had also “ordered” different siblings from what he got when he was little, but who loved those sisters so much anyway. It continued as she began to act out her role as “big sister.” Big sisters help out, take care of brothers, and get special privileges . . . like staying up a little later to have some time alone with Mom and Dad.

### **Our Adjustment**

Adjustment for Jeff and I was something of a whirlwind. So many details had to be cared for before and when the boys first arrived at our home that we couldn't really think about our needs. When all the preparations, emergencies, and changes

stopped, we settled in to depending on God's provisions for coping with those changes. Since we felt that God had called us to this, we felt that He would certainly provide for our adjustment to this calling as well. We loved and helped *the children* to adjust, and we leaned *heavily* and sometimes tearfully on our Heavenly Parent to love and help us to adjust.

Time alone became a luxury. So shortly after we adopted, we began going on a “date” for a couple hours each week — to the park, to the beach, even to the grocery store, anywhere alone together. We left our new family in the capable hands of a neighbor, who loved and doted on them as their own grandmother would have. They seemed to benefit greatly from this arrangement. Mom and Dad returned refreshed, and the children had been loved and hugged and had increased their sense of family ties to one another.

### **The Happy Ending**

It didn't take long before the distinctions between the time before and the time after adoption became blurred. Each of us thought back and had difficulty remembering that “time before.” Had we *really* been separate before? Hadn't we all always been a family? In our hearts and our minds, God had planned for us to be together, and He made our family a reality. It hardly seems possible that we could ever have truly lived without one another.

Perhaps God is not finished building our family yet? And perhaps God calls your family to grow by adoption as well. [†]

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*If you are interested in adopting “hard-to-place” children, contact your county's department of children's services. Or if you want more information or encouragement as you consider whether God is calling you to this kind of service, you may write the Weidenhamers in care of THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805.*



# Pre-Easter Diary of a Country Parson

Insights which remind us that Easter is not a once-a-year event, but a reality that impacts our day-to-day lives.

By Brian H. Moore

**Note to the reader:** The following accounts are being written *before* the events they describe actually happen. In biblical grammar this is called "the prophetic past," a device employed by the prophet to emphasize the certainty of his predictions. Since I am not that kind of prophet and since life is uncertain (James 4:13-15), any discrepancy between these accounts and the actual unfolding of events herein described is entirely providential. Also, the persons mentioned here are the actual people; I saw no need to protect their identity or their reputation.

**February 8 — Ash Wednesday:** Today marks the beginning of the pre-Easter period known as Lent (short for "lenten," an Old English word meaning "spring"). Lent is the forty weekdays (Sundays excluded) prior to Easter observed by Christians in many traditions as a period for penitence, fasting, and prayer.

Ash Wednesday is so-called for the ashes the penitent places on his or her forehead as a sign of repentance. In my younger days (and probably even now to some extent) I thought of the practice as a bit formal, if not downright boastful. It seemed as if the penitent was saying, "Look at me, everybody! I'm penitent today." Didn't Jesus say, "When you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father who is unseen?"

In the community in which I grew up, the Roman Catholic presence was obvious. We Protestants reacted to questions like "What are you giving up for Lent?" by denying the validity of the whole practice. We'd respond, "If it's valid to give it up for Lent, why not give it up altogether?" And then we'd do nothing.

Might there not be another approach, a search for some truth in the practice, so that even if we do not want to endorse it full-scale, we can at least profit from a tradition of others? Or can we only reject?

So on this Ash Wednesday, I need to ask myself, What part do penitence and self-denial play in my life? Will I take time to consider the question? Or am I too busy for such reflections? Am I mesmerized or anesthetized by busyness, pressure, and schedule? To be sure, there won't be any ashes on my forehead. But will there be any on my heart?

*Rev. Moore is senior pastor of the St. James, Maryland, Brethren Church.*

**February 9 — Thursday:** Today I meet with a small group of Brethren pastors for discussion and mutual support. There are five of us, and we have an unusually healthy comradeship. If one is rejoicing, we rejoice together. If one is perplexed, we listen and try to help.

Jesus anticipated resurrection when He said, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst." This is not an excuse to justify low attendance; it is a promise of the Lord's presence with His people in whatever circumstances they gather. In our support group, we have found this promise to be true. Some meetings I would not walk across the street to attend, but I eagerly drive the 75 miles once a month to meet with my fellow pastors, and I'm looking forward to it today.

**February 12 — Sunday:**

*O day of rest and gladness,  
O day of joy and light,  
O balm of care and sadness,  
Most beautiful, most bright . . .*

*On thee, at the creation,  
The light first had its birth;  
On thee, for our salvation,  
Christ rose from depths of earth . . .*

Christopher Wordsworth

How refreshing the Lord's Day is — even for those of us who preach! While we may be weary by nightfall, we feel the satisfaction that only comes with serving. My ongoing objective is to seek to do my part in seeing that worship at our church helps make the Lord's Day a "day of rest and gladness." I believe that the worship service especially should convey a sense of joy and excitement — "because He lives!"

Even though we are working our way through Lent, preparing for the bursting forth of Easter, to project a somber tone into our worship would be play-acting to a degree, because it cannot be hidden that He is alive *now* and evermore! So there is joy in worship now, and when Easter comes, we'll probably just turn it up a notch or two!

This evening we have our second ever "Ministry Night." The work of the church has been divided among





ministries led by elected chair people but with volunteers sharing the tasks. This seems in keeping with the fact that our Risen Lord, when He ascended on high, "gave gifts to men."

This isn't the final solution to helping people find and use their gifts for service, but it is a step in that direction — a step that says we take the truth about gifts seriously and that we take lay ministry seriously. On our first "Ministry Night" the place was really buzzing, and I think people were pleased to be so involved in the work of the church.

**February 14 — Tuesday (Valentine's Day):** This morning we have our weekly staff meeting. I am privileged to be in a church which needs and has multiple program staff. When a church reaches 200 in attendance, it is recommended that a second program staff member be added. If this is not done, we are told, the church will suffer from "tired pastor syndrome."

I believe it! Before Pastor Tim Garner came on staff, I was "meeting myself coming and going." I wasn't entirely unhappy with that lifestyle, but it wasn't good for me, my family, or the church. That ultra-busy business is addictive — one can scarcely slow down to smell the flowers. And you tell yourself that smelling flowers doesn't help the Kingdom anyway, so you keep going.

But now I see the better way. I have discovered that when I stop to smell the flowers, or to attend my sons' basketball game, the Kingdom goes on anyway. I can relax more, enjoy life more, diversify more, and — I hope — become a more well-rounded, versatile person.

My prayer for this St. Valentine's Day: "O God, shoot an arrow of love through my heart, that my love will be more like Yours."

**February 16 — Thursday:** Tomorrow one of the men in our Valley Pastors Group, Rev. Pat Velanzon, pastor of the Bethlehem Brethren Church, is having hip replacement surgery. He lives 120 miles from here, but I think I'll take the afternoon to pay him a visit at his home.

**February 17 — Friday:** I wonder how Pat is getting along.\* He was to be at the hospital at six this morning, with surgery a bit later. Continued prayer seems my fraternal duty today.

Today one of our older gentlemen of the church, Paul Culler, turns eighty. I have been trying to help our octogenarians celebrate their day by taking them to lunch. It's a way we have found to show appreciation for our older folks. We value their presence; seek their wisdom; appreciate their faithfulness. Paul is quite a guy! He goes to the field to help with plowing, harvesting, and all the other chores common to farming. He has had some health problems this winter, but is making a good comeback. Happy birthday, Paul!

\*Rev. Velanzon's hip replacement surgery went well, and he is now recuperating at home. Editor

**February 20 — Monday:** Today my calendar has eraser marks on it. The original notation, still legible, reads, "DBCM Interviews in Ashland." The meeting was cancelled because of developments, progress in our procedures, and a lengthy telephone conference some time ago. I would have gone as a member of the committee trying to select a new Director of Brethren Church Ministries.

It has been beneficial to me through the years to serve the denomination in a number of capacities. It is always good to know that any one of us, pastor or congregation, is part of something bigger than our small sectors of everyday service. The temptation to provincialism is very strong.

I am sure I have come away from those denominational meetings with much more than I gave. And I am constantly encouraged when I'm reminded that our little denomination packs a pretty good-sized wallop in the world. But most of all, it is the wallop of "salt and light," penetrating, influencing, preserving, illuminating. And so shall it ever be as long as time shall last.

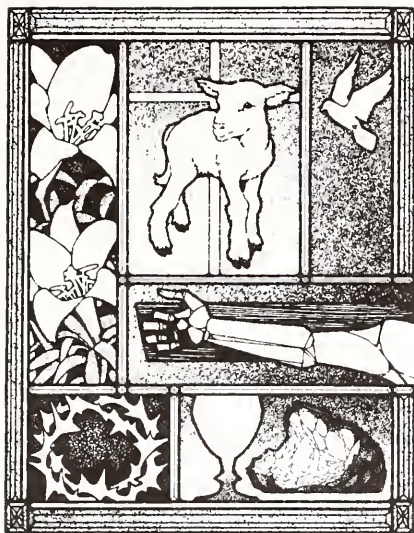
Instead of going to Ashland, Amanda (my wife) and I are heading south to Florida for a congregational multi-staff conference called "Leadership for Growth." The conference will deal with leading a multi-staff church in a growing situation. Now that we are two years into a multiple-staff ministry, I feel, as senior pastor, that I ought to find out what I am supposed to be doing!

"I will build my church," Jesus said — another of His statements that looked beyond His resurrection. I remember the process — long, drawn out, sometimes painful — that I went through in order to come to terms with this statement. I had to discover the tension between "I will build" and my part in the process. Do I build His church or does He? If He does, what do I do and what does my work have to do with His work? I also had to learn that it is *His* church, not my church.

The "worst-case-scenario" abuse of Jesus' statement would be to make both first person pronouns apply to me, the pastor. I want no part of that! As it is, He is the Designer/Builder, and I am just a common laborer on the crew. I do what He tells me (not consistently, however) and try to follow His blueprints (not perfectly, unfortunately).

**February 26 — Sunday:** Pastor Tim is preaching today, since I have been away all week. This is better for me and for the church. While at the conference I could concentrate on its message without consciously (or subconsciously) working on my message for Sunday. This is another advantage of multi-staff ministry that has nothing to do with church size. When I am away for the major part of a week, Tim preaches. We share the ministry. This is not always easy, for both of us have had "solo" pastorates in the past, but we work at it, talk about it, and try to help each other have meaningful and fulfilling service.

**March 5 — Sunday:** Today is Senior Citizens Sunday at our church. This is a tradition at St. James, a tradi-



tion that says again to our older folks that we appreciate them, their witness, and their wisdom born of years. The ladies who plan this always have a fine program that blends the sentimental with the present. Memory and hope meet in this annual program.

Tonight we go to Maurertown, Va., for a District Celebration. This is the fourth of these, and they have been good for the district. This district is not only characterized by terrestrial beauty, but also by the beauty of Christ's body at work here. I like these district events. More than that, I think they are good for the Brethren. Given the many forces that fracture relationships in our society, I am happy for any occasion that helps to build them.

**March 12 — Sunday:** This is World Relief Sunday at St. James, the culmination of a seven-week emphasis on helping the needy of the world. Our preacher for the morning is Rev. Marlin McCann, president of the World Relief Board of The Brethren Church. Our people are very responsive to this emphasis, willingly giving generously to help alleviate world hunger. The Living Christ will call us to account for this some day (Matt. 25: 31-46), and we want to be unashamed on that day.

**March 19 — Palm Sunday:** In addition to our regular morning services, this evening we host the area churches for a Choir Festival. We have been doing this for several years, and the response has been tremendous. The music is glorious and a fitting introduction to Holy Week.

*O worship the King, all glorious above,  
O gratefully sing His Power and His Love . . .*

Many of our Brethren churches observe Holy Communion this evening. I will be helping the Bethlehem Brethren in their observance while their pastor recovers from his hip surgery. (Obviously, I will miss the choir festival; Pastor Tim will serve as host.)

Communion is surely another discipline so meaningful and helpful in our Christian walk. By its practice we are reminded again of our vulnerability in this fallen world, of our need to stick together in bonds of love, and most of all of God's amazing grace to freely offer life through Jesus Christ, whose body was broken and whose blood was shed.

Yet in many places in our brotherhood, the observance of Holy Communion is being taken rather lightly. In fact, the discipline is being lost by many of our members. There is more a sense of option than of obligation

in "remembering." It is my belief that revival in The Brethren Church will include a recovery of the mystery of grace as expressed in Holy Communion.

**March 24 — Good Friday:** This day was bad before it was good. It was bad because of what it says about our sin; it is good because of what Jesus has done about our sin. It was bad because of the evil conniving that produced it; it is good because even in the face of wicked machinations, a word of forgiveness was spoken. It was bad because *I was there* too, helping to crucify the Lord; it is good because I came *back* there and found forgiveness, restoration, reconciliation, life.

There was darkness over the land that day. There is still darkness wherever sin is doing its ugly work. But even the wrath of men shall praise God, as the cross has revealed!

**March 26 — Easter:** The Day has come! Celebrate! Ring it out! Christ has burst His three-day prison!

*Angels! roll the rock away,  
Death! yield up thy mighty prey,  
See! he rises from the tomb,  
Glowing with immortal bloom.*

*'Tis the Savior! angels, raise  
Fame's eternal trump of praise!  
Let the earth's remotest bound  
Hear the joy inspiring sound.*

*Now, ye saints, lift up your eyes!  
Now to glory see him rise,  
In long triumph up the sky —  
Up to waiting worlds on high.*

*Praise him all ye heav'nly choirs!  
Praise, and sweep your golden lyres!  
Shout, O earth, in rapt'rous song,  
Let the strains be sweet and strong!*

— from an old Mennonite hymnal

Dr. Hugh Thompson Kerr, Sr., once said that Easter is one time when music best approximates the nature of the message. In keeping with that sentiment, our choir will present the cantata *Jesus Shall Reign* in our two worship services this morning.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is not only an awesome display of power, it is also a statement of hope. God is not done with this world yet. A door has been opened and it has not yet been shut. Some day it will be shut and no man can enter. But it is open now so that all who come to Him in faith will be saved. Cynicism, skepticism, and secularism may have dulled our senses to this great event of God in Christ, but this joyful day reminds us all again that this world is not a "closed continuum," but is open to the mighty works of God.

**March 27 — Monday:** Drained! Depleted! Consumed! But oh, so energized; so excited; so happy! He lives, and so do I! And now, my soul, go forth in the power of His resurrection, looking back thankfully and looking forward to a sure and certain hope, realizable because Jesus Christ is alive for evermore! [†]



# Developing a Community of Love

By Frederick J. Finks

IN THE YEAR 1704, Alexander and Anna Margaretha Mack made a decision that was to forever change the course of their lives. In fact, it would also have an impact on the 100th General Conference of The Brethren Church convening in Ashland, Ohio, in the year 1988.

In 1704 the Macks felt that they could no longer associate themselves with the Reformed Church. So, in spite of the threat of persecution and even death, they officially withdrew their membership from that church and openly identified themselves as Pietistic Separatists. The conflict that followed enveloped Mack's entire family, including his father and his brother. And yet Mack's faith was like that of Abraham, who turned his back on his homeland, on his family, and on his vocation in order to follow a greater call on the journey of faith with God.

Four years later — in 1708 — Alexander and Anna Margaretha, along with six other people, entered the river outside Schwarzenau, Germany, and again, under the threat of death, were baptized.

## A community of believers

What was begun that day started to grow and to flourish, as this small band of men and women were transformed into *Gemeinschaft*, the German word meaning community. This German word, *Gemeinschaft*, took on

new life in itself, for it meant a community of believers, a close-knit community, a community that had a family feeling, a sense of cooperation and belonging.

For Alexander Mack, it would take on even added meaning, for he would commit his whole being, give his whole life to support this young church. He sold his share in the family mill and spent much of his money in paying fines and imprisonment costs incurred by these young believers who made up The Brethren Church.

When persecution drove this band of 200 Brethren out of Germany and into Holland, it was Alexander Mack who footed most of the bill. Later, when the Brethren came to America, it was Alexander Mack who over and over again modeled what it meant to be part of a community.

On February 19, 1735, Alexander Mack died. He had poured out his life for those with whom he had shared this journey. Those who knew him were touched by his sincerity, by his commitment to Christ and the Scriptures, and by his commitment to the community of faith. Mack modeled for the early Brethren what it meant to be family, what it meant to be a community of believers.

For those early Brethren, the journey to God's kingdom constituted the most profound commonality possible. This commonality found its outworking among them in the sharing of their homes, their resources, and their jobs for the common good of the Brethren. And not just for the Brethren, but for the world around them as well. This was one of the greatest gifts The Brethren Church

had to offer. They were a people who dared to care deeply for one another.

Today The Brethren Church is still marked by community. We find among ourselves a sense of fulfillment in building relationships that have deep and abiding roots. We seek to care for the needs of one another through genuine outpourings of love. We've learned to handle problems together, to work together, and to offer support and encouragement to one another.

## An experience of community

My first experience of community occurred in the late 60's, while I was a student at Ashland Theological Seminary. I discovered that I was part of a community of believers who shared the same concept of ministry, the same values, and the same commitment to a call from the living God to service. We experienced the same struggles; we found ourselves poor together; we worked hard together; and as a result we became a community. That community has continued to exist, and the friendships that were formed in those years continue even to this very day.

Later on, in my first pastorate at the Winding Waters Brethren Church, the concept of community became even more real to me. I again found myself in the midst of a community of believers who shared common goals and a common understanding of ministry. Here again the concept of family began to grow and to flourish, as it developed in the lives of the people in our congregation. I know how it touched my own family personally, a young family far away from our biological parents and relatives. God raised up for us,

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*Dr. Finks is vice president of Ashland Theological Seminary.*

*This article is an edited transcription of a message Dr. Finks delivered at the 1988 General Conference. This was the last of six messages by Brethren elders on topics of significance to Brethren. The other five messages appeared in the last five issues of the EVANGELIST.*

***"Today The Brethren Church is still marked by community. We find among ourselves a sense of fulfillment in building relationships that have deep and abiding roots."***

as He promised His disciples, fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters and homes and farms — a family, a community of believers.

I'll never forget one Sunday morning worship service when Nancy came forward to make a commitment of faith. She told how, during the final month of her recent pregnancy, she had been confined to bed and had been unable even to cook for her husband and young son. She told how the church had risen up and, as a community, had supported her during that time.

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***"[Alexander] Mack modeled for the early Brethren what it meant to be family, what it meant to be a community of believers."***

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Then she pointed to another gal in the congregation — a jovial, loving, caring individual — and she said, "I know that I am loved by Karen. I know that Karen loves me deeply, because she came to my house, cooked meals for my family, became a mother to my son, and took care of our every need. I know she loves me because she even cleaned my toilets." Here was community!

I used to be a jogger. Every Monday morning several men from the Winding Waters congregation and I used to jog an eight-mile loop around a lake. It was a difficult run, a tiring run. I remember one particular day. I had run seven of the eight miles and was on the home stretch when my body said, "Finks, you can't make another step." I began to run slower, and slower, and slower.

The men I ran with were all what you would call serious runners. They were the kind who wouldn't stop even if someone keeled over and died. As I began to slow down they began pulling ahead, so with my last breath I said, "You guys go ahead." I didn't need to say it, for they were

going to do it anyway. They kept right on running.

But one of the men, Bob, ran 20 paces, then stopped and ran back. He said, "I'll walk with you the rest of the way." We didn't take more than ten steps until I started running again. I don't know where I found the energy, but I think it came from the sense of community, the sense of caring that Bob had displayed. Community. People caring for one another.

When I returned to the seminary in 1982 to take my present position, I again discovered that the concept of community was alive and well. Once again I found that I shared the journey with people who had common goals, as they were involved in training men and women for ministry. My colleagues and staff are good encouragers. I very seldom go a day without someone expressing love or appreciation to me. And they do it among one another as well. They are a true community of believers.

As I travel throughout The Brethren Church, going to various districts and to various local churches, I likewise discover time and time again that the community of believers is alive and well in The Brethren Church. We are committed to the concept of loving one another.

This community spirit was also in evidence during Conference week, as together we lifted in prayer our concerns for Keith, who underwent surgery; for Miguel, who is seeking a visa in order to come back from Peru; for Alice, as she endured tremendous suffering that resulted in her death; for Lester, who was in intensive care.

I also saw evidence of the community spirit among our young people as I sat behind a whole row of them one Conference session. As we sang, "Oh, how he loves you and me!" they were pointing at one another, hugging one another, and holding arms with one another. This was a genuine expression of community. Yes, the spirit of community is alive

and well in The Brethren Church.

We need to realize, however, that our greatest strength can also be our greatest weakness. The early Brethren knew that *Gemeinschaft*, this close-knit community, could not survive if they turned inward and lavished their love upon themselves. Therefore their commitment to love one another found open expression within the greater community, which resulted in converts and growth.

But I am fearful that we, while holding to a commitment to love one another, have turned inward. Our close-knit community has kept others out instead of welcoming them in. Therefore, the strength of our family has been weakened by the exclusion of those who desperately want in but who can't find acceptance.

Community is maintained and strengthened only when commitment and love are at the center of thought of the community. It is impossible for the Christian community to function and grow or even exist if love and commitment are absent.

In John 13:34-35 Jesus says this: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (RSV).

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***"It is impossible for the Christian community to function and grow or even exist if love and commitment are absent."***

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Later, in the First Epistle of John, John continues the teaching of Christ by saying these words: "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and [everyone] who loves is born of God and knows God. . . . In this the love of God was manifested among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we



***“Brethren, if we learn to love in the manner in which Christ taught us, we will build a bridge to the world. They will no longer see the hypocrisy of our inconsistency. Instead, they will see Christ.”***

might live through him” (I Jn. 4:7 & 9, RSV).

Christ admonishes us to truly love one another. Love is evidence of the Christian community. In fact, it holds the Christian community together. In this — loving one another — we are very successful as Brethren.

But Christ does not stop there. In a conversation with a lawyer, recorded in chapter 22 of Matthew’s Gospel, He defines the greatest commandment by quoting part of the *Shema*, the basic statement of Jewish belief: “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD; and you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might” (Deut. 6:4-5, RSV).

Jesus calls this command to love God “the great and first commandment.” Then He adds, “And a second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matt. 22:39, RSV).

Israel knew that the key to keeping the law was to love God. Obedience to the law was predicated upon a genuine love for God. It was from this outflow of love that the law found merit upon the hearts and minds of the children of Israel. They kept the law because they loved God.

Even the admonition to love your neighbor as yourself was not something new to the lawyer. The Levitical law stated, “. . . you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD” (Lev. 19:18). The basis of such love for one’s neighbor is God’s love for us.

You understand, don’t you, that love is not just one of God’s attributes; it is His very nature. God is love. He is love in whatever He does. When He creates, He creates in love. When He gives, He gives in love. When He chastizes, He chastizes in love. He can do nothing else, for He is totally love.

God’s ultimate expression of this love was revealed in the gift of Jesus Christ to a world that was lost in sin. He gave His Son that the world

might not perish, but that the world through Him might be saved. It was to this degree of love that Christ taught us to love the stranger and the outcast, the publican and the sinner, the broken and the downtrodden, the poor and the destitute. He said it’s easy to love your friends, but love those who hate you. Then in reply to the question, “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus began to define our neighborhood as the world around us, not just our community of faith.

Has the church mistaken the command of Jesus for a suggestion? “A new *suggestion* I give to you, that you love one another.” Did He mean love to be optional? You can do what you want to do with it. And you only have to love those whom you want to love.

No! Jesus said, “A new *commandment* I give to you.” “A new **commandment** I give to you.” The truth of the matter is, we’re not given the option of loving one another. We are given a directive; we are given a command. In fact, that directive to love one another — that command — is one of the most repeated exhor-

tations in the whole of the New Testament. It appears no less than 55 times as a direct command. Here are some examples:

“Love your enemies.” “Pray for those who persecute you.” “Love your neighbor as yourself.” “Follow the way of love.” “Do everything in love.” “Serve one another in love.” “Be patient, bearing with one another in love.” “Husbands, love your wives.” “Have the same love as Christ.” “Put on love.” “Pursue love.” “Spur one another on to love.” “Let us not love with words or tongue, but in actions and in truth.”

Brethren, if we learn to love in the manner in which Christ taught us, we will build a bridge to the world. They will no longer see the hypocrisy of our inconsistency. Instead, they will see Christ. They won’t see you. They will see Christ. They won’t view the church as a social club centered upon itself. Instead, they will see it as a beacon of light and of hope reaching out to a lost and dying world, drawing people in.

Brethren, let us love one another. And let us love our neighbors as ourselves. [†]

## *Easter Chorus*

*Christ is arisen.*

*Joy to thee, mortal!*

*Out of His prison,*

*Forth from its portal!*

*Christ is not sleeping,*

*Seek Him no longer;*

*Strong was His keeping,*

*Jesus was stronger.*

*Christ is arisen.*

*Seek Him not here;*

*Lonely His prison,*

*Empty His bier;*

*Vain His entombing,*

*Spices and lawn,*

*Vain the perfuming,*

*Jesus is gone.*

*Christ is arisen.*

*Joy to thee, mortal!*

*Empty His prison,*

*Broken its portal!*

*Rising, He giveth*

*His shroud to the sod;*

*Risen, He liveth,*

*And liveth to God.*

Yohann Wolfgang von Goethe, 1749-1832  
Tr. by Arthur Cleveland Coxe, 1818-1896



# Jesus Is Lord

"... that in everything He might have the supremacy" (Col. 1:18).

By Moderator Kenneth L. Sullivan

**T**HE BRETHREN have a new vision and a new hope. We are anticipating future growth, expanding confidence, and increasing cooperation among national and local leaders as we seek to be obedient to Christ's mandate for the Brethren.

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***"GCEC is working to bring to General Conference a . . . mission statement, which can be the driving force for both current and future ministries."***

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Just last August we committed ourselves to a bold new approach in denominational ministry. Under the leadership of then moderator Dr. Dale Stoffer, our General Conference voted to restructure the national organization, except for the National Missionary Board, and to hire a denominational Director of Brethren Church Ministries. The General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) expects to announce in the very near future who will fill this vital position.\*

We have positioned our church to embrace, by faith, the future God has for us. GCEC is working to bring to General Conference an articulated denominational mission

\*See page 20 for an announcement about this position.

statement, which can be the driving force for both current and future ministries. It should be the vehicle the Director of Brethren Church Ministries can use for setting realistic and measurable goals, establishing accountability at the national level, and developing a unified focus for The Brethren Church.

No longer do we feel that we must somehow apologize for being Brethren. We are discovering that those distinctives which set us apart as Brethren offer a profound depth of biblical truth. Ours is a gospel that proclaims that Christ's Lordship cannot be divorced from His saving work, but instead marks and restructures every part of our private and corporate lives.

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***"Our Lord calls us to be Brethren, to be obedient to that calling which includes all those characteristics that make us Brethren."***

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In the face of all that runs counter to sound Christian belief, we still adhere to the authority of God's word, with the New Testament as the rule of faith and order in the church. We still believe in a life of faithful obedience to Christ's commands, personal integrity and ac-

countability, the stewardship of our physical and spiritual possessions, close Christian fellowship and a covenantal body of believers with its disciplined community life, the practice of the ordinances as originally taught, and a Christocentric approach to the interpretation of Scriptures.

Perhaps we don't practice all we claim to believe, but we are rediscovering ourselves. Our failure lies precisely at that point where we have been unfaithful to our original

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***"No longer do we feel that we must somehow apologize for being Brethren. We are discovering that those distinctives which set us apart as Brethren offer a profound depth of biblical truth."***

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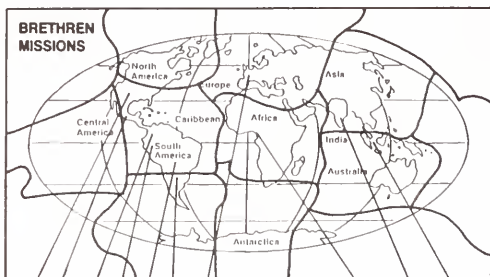
calling to be Brethren. I believe that we have been ashamed of our beliefs and practices and have tried for too long to pattern ourselves after everyone else. Our Lord calls us to be Brethren, to be obedient to that calling which includes all those characteristics that make us Brethren.

Those churches that God seems to bless are those that maintain an uncompromising commitment to established truth, clearly articulated doctrine, well-defined and measurable goals that flow from the desire to accomplish what they believe, and accountability among one another as well as to God.

It is time for us to speak clearly the gospel message as we have received it from our Lord. We will be far more effective if we do so with one voice, united behind a single purpose, committed to and supporting each other as a covenantal body.

Jesus is Lord! He is Lord of our individual lives, Lord of our local churches, Lord of our district works, and Lord of our denominational ministries. Obedience to Him requires an uncompromising effort from every Brethren to support the work that Christ has established in The Brethren Church. [†]





# Are We Still Puzzled?

## "PUZZLED ABOUT MISSIONS?"

That was the catchy title of a small brochure of the Brethren Missionary Board 20 years ago. In 1968 The Brethren Church had overseas missionaries in two countries. In Argentina were missionaries John and Regina Rowsey, Kenneth and Jeannette Solomon, Raymond and Marilyn Aspinall, and William and Frances Curtis. Also at that time, working with the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria, were missionaries Larry and Rose Bolinger, Richard and Kitty Winfield, and short-term workers Harold and Shirley Bowers. In bold print the brochure stated: "WE CAN NO LONGER BE HESITANT OR DOUBTFUL — LET'S PUT MISSIONS IN ITS PLACE!"

I believe the past 20 years have proven without a doubt that the Brethren "know the place of missions." Thanks to the missionary people of past years (others in addition to those mentioned above), a very supportive denomination, an aggressive and committed Missionary Board, and the leadership of such visionary Brethren as M. Virgil Ingraham, we have "found" our place.

Our place today in missions is worldwide in scope. Let's have a look . . .

**AFRICA . . .** We are still there! No longer do we have Brethren missionary people in Nigeria, but the Brethren influence will be felt there, I believe, until the Lord returns. Our involvement is minimal, but the Brethren send annual support to assist in the training of Nigerian leadership.

**INDIA . . .** In India one finds the largest concentration of Brethren outside of North America. Rev. K. Prasanth Kumar serves as Director

of Brethren Missions in India, working diligently in evangelism as well as assisting in the economic and social strengthening of that great country. India just happens to be the largest democracy in the world, and, at its present growth rate, will soon surpass China in population.

Exact statistics are difficult to ascertain, since they are constantly changing, but there are scores of Brethren congregations in India, with over fifty Brethren pastors and evangelists. The Brethren also have an orphanage in Rajahmundry, a hospital (clinic), training schools in Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam, and Rajahmundry, and daily involvement in World Relief.

**MALAYSIA . . .** Here the Brethren, under the direction of David Loi, have a difficult but rewarding ministry to the Chinese-speaking people of that country. The church, in spite of hardships and its inability so far to receive government recognition, is growing. The Brethren are established in Johor Bahru, where they meet in the residence of David and Jenny Loi, and also hold meetings in Penang in a kindergarten school operated by clergywoman Mdm. Hong. David Chew supervises the work in Penang. David and Jenny Loi plan to be in the U.S. later this year.

**MEXICO . . .** Our neighbors to the South present a tremendous challenge to the Brethren. The Brethren Church, under the supervision of Juan Carlos Miranda, has determined that our major efforts should be concentrated in Mexico City, that vast city of over 22 million people. At the present time there are three Brethren congregations in Mexico: Santa Teresa, with interim pastor Jose Castro; Palo

Solo, with pastor Rogelio Herrera; and Lagaria, with pastor Antonio SanTiago. There are also two active mission points, San Cristobul and Carrasco.

The problems in establishing a work in Mexico are many. All church property becomes the property of the government, and activity of the church, for legal purposes, is under the direction of a Civil Association made up of Mexican-born citizens. Our work prospers only because of the tireless efforts of Dr. Miranda and the dedicated Brethren in Mexico.

**COLOMBIA . . .** This beautiful country has acquired a bad reputation, thanks to the much-publicized drug trafficking. But there is much that is good in Colombia, and The Brethren Church is making her presence known. The work, begun by Ken and Jeannette Solomon, has had its "up-and-down-times," but thanks to the tenacity and dedication of Mark and Chantal Logan, the church remains.

The Logans during the past two years have been joined by our newest missionaries, David and Diane Kerner, located in Medellín, and Tim and Jan Solomon, located in Bogotá. Years ago the Kerners and Solomons felt God's call to mission service, and in the timing of their Lord arrived on the field. The Logans will probably terminate their service in Colombia this year, but are already seeking God's direction for future ministry. It is hoped that they will one day return to France, Chantal's homeland, to begin a Brethren Church there.

**PERU . . .** God does work in mysterious ways. The Miguel Antunez family became acquainted with missionary Ken Solomon in Sarasota, Florida. From there, fol-

lowing a great deal of trial and difficulty, they arrived in Ashland to become part of the seminary family. Immigration problems forced their return to Peru, where they await permission to return to the U.S. to complete studies. The Brethren provide partial support for the Antunez family as they do preliminary work looking toward the future establishing of a Brethren Church in their homeland.

**ARGENTINA . . .** The Brethren Church in Argentina is fully established and organized. They are now involved in their own church-planting efforts at home and beyond their borders in Paraguay. Assigned to Argentina as missionaries are Raymond and Marilyn Aspinall, William and Sharon

Winter, and Allen Baer. Ray also serves as South America Field Supervisor. The emphasis and involvement of Brethren missions constantly changes as a church becomes stronger and "on its own." But we are thankful to be a vital part of the tremendous Brethren Church in Argentina. In addition to their local growth and their ministry to Paraguay, they remain committed to the outreach of CAVEA, with studios located in the Nunez Church in Buenos Aires.

**PARAGUAY . . .** The mission work in Paraguay is under the direction of Argentinian Juan Anzulovich. This mission church is the culmination of much prayer and commitment of Brethren in the U.S. and Argentina. It is our

prayer that we can become of greater assistance to Argentina in this outreach of their vision.

**STILL PUZZLED?** We hope not. The Brethren Church is now in eight countries of the world, in addition to home missions and special ministries here in the U.S.A. Please be assured that this work will continue, and be expanded, in direct proportion to your continued prayers and faithfulness.

**BRETHREN MISSIONS . . .** The vision is possible only because of your faithfulness and your belief that God is entitled to first claim on our time, our energy, and our money.

Thank you.

James R. Black,  
Executive Director

# Blessings in Disguise

By Tim and Jan Solomon, Brethren Missionaries in Bogotá, Colombia

**W**HAT happens when you turn on your kitchen faucet? You probably assume that water will come out. Well, that's not always the case in our neighborhood of Villa del Rio, in the city of Bogotá. And for that we are grateful. Recently, when our water was turned off two days for repairs, the Lord turned this inconvenience into a blessing for us and members of our congregation.

The story actually began last September, when we started giving water to a family next door who couldn't afford the expensive hook-up charge. Through this gift of water, we were able to introduce them to Christ, who gives us living water free for the asking. One by one, we watched as the entire family came to know the Lord and as He began to move in their lives. Shortly thereafter, they were able to find another home in the same neighborhood, a much larger and nicer house, complete with running water.

Then, on December 26, the

neighborhood of Villa del Rio was suddenly without water. People began carrying buckets up and down the streets searching for friends who still had the precious commodity. Bottled water disappeared quickly from the neighborhood stores. But one family of new Christians was not concerned, for they had been spared this inconvenience so that they might have the opportunity to give of themselves. And so, just as the church had given water to Lilia and Hugo, they now returned the favor by sharing their water with every home in the church family, including ours.

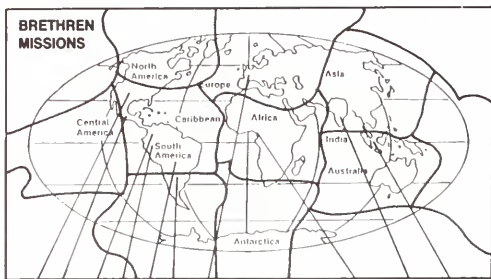
The next time *you* are inconvenienced in any way, try to find the blessings in disguise. In our case, the blessings were many. First, our water was off for only two days, not two weeks, as we are told is sometimes the case. Second, the water line broke the day *after* Christmas, and not while we were doing Christmas dishes for over 20 church dinner guests. Next, we

were able to teach our four-year-old daughter, Lisa, that many children never experience the joy of available water. And finally, a church family learned that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

As a footnote, our new next-door neighbors moved in the day the water went off, and our first encounter with them was to offer them water. Soon we hope to be able to offer them "living water" as well.

Finding blessings in disguise is a major part of our work here in Villa del Rio. Every Thursday night the church holds a meeting in which the majority of time is spent in prayer. Blessings, such as the above-mentioned water incident, are recorded in a church notebook, along with personal prayer requests. A place is also provided in the notebook to check off earlier requests as they are answered. Special prayer vigils are sometimes held as well, and prayer time in general has proven to be one of the richest experiences of





the Villa del Rio congregation.

Another opportunity to share both blessings and heartaches is given each Wednesday evening when the men and women divide into Laymen's and W.M.S. groups. Pertinent themes are discussed, and problems are shared when these small but faithful groups get together weekly.

On Saturdays, the youth meet for weekly Bible studies, and this eager-to-grow group has recently formulated a list of goals for 1989. These include passing out tracts, holding church work days, and planning outings with other church youth groups. A goal for many youth and adults this year is to read through the Bible. We have been passing out weekly reading schedules and hope that many in our congregation will be able to begin what we feel to be a very important habit for a Christian — reading through the Bible each year.

Sunday school is another important ministry of the Villa del Rio church, and currently three classes are held. Mark Logan has been teaching a course on evangelism to the more mature Christians, Jan is in charge of the children, with the help of teen Claudia Rodriguez, and Tim leads a discipleship class for new believers. As of this writing, new converts include two couples, three young women, and five teenagers.

On Sunday evenings we follow-up with Bible studies, and about once a month, an evangelistic movie is shown. We are very pleased with the warm welcome that we have received from our neighbors, and we pray that many more will come to know the Lord through the testimony of the believers in Villa del Rio.

To give you an example of the vitality of the Colombian people, we would like to share some experiences from our first Christmas in Bogotá. If celebrating is an art, the Colombian people have certainly mastered it. Here, "painting the town" is taken literally, and in our neighborhood the sidewalks, streets, and walls were filled with scenes of Christmas spirit. Fireworks were displayed with such overwhelming force that the entire city and surrounding mountainside seemed to blink on and off with the effects of

celebrated Christ's birth with our church family.

The Christmas program included presentations by the children and the youth, special music, a time of sharing testimonies, and a message by Mark Logan. After the program, the congregation gathered for a typical Colombian dinner. At the close of the day, we paused with our family to reflect on the blessings that God had bestowed upon us during the past year.

In conclusion, we are thankful for the support of our families back home, the Mission Board, and you, the faithful, committed Brethren

*During the worship service held in their home on Christmas morning, Jan (far l., playing flute) and Tim Solomon (far r., playing guitar) joined Rebecca Logan (3rd from r., holding recorder) and several Colombian young people in presenting special music.*



the "light show." In our neighborhood the fireworks lasted all night, and when we awoke the next morning there were still a few people dancing in the streets.

Despite all the above-mentioned excitement, the most meaningful part of Christmas for the Brethren believers of Villa del Rio was the worship service held in our home on Christmas morning. Since many in our congregation are recent converts, this was their first Christmas "in the Lord," and so they celebrated it in a different manner from years past.

We listened with joy, for example, as Mary and Mauricio shared what Christ had done in their lives this past year, and as they thanked God for their new "family in the Lord." We also were not without "family" in this new land, as we

who are making it possible for us to be here. We also praise God for the support of our fellow missionaries in Colombia, the Kerners and the Logans. Dave and Diane Kerner, although living in another city, have been a real blessing to us. Here in Bogotá, the Logans have helped us in various ways, especially in the first few months as we were getting settled. Above all, we are thankful for Jesus Christ, without whom this work would not be possible, and who has given us the greatest gift of all — eternal life.

Please continue to remember the work in Bogotá, Colombia, in your prayers. And when you turn on your water faucet, ask the Lord to enable us to give His gift of "living water" to thirsty hearts in Colombia. [†]

# Progress in Bell Ville

By William P. Winter, Brethren Missionary in Argentina

**D**URING the past several months you may have noticed several references in the Missionary Board's *Praise and Prayer* to the work in Bell Ville, Argentina. I would like to take this opportunity to tell you about the past work and the future hopes for this outreach of the Argentine Brethren Church.

Bell Ville is a small city of about 30,000 inhabitants. It is located in farming country in the province of Cordoba on Route 9, the main highway between Buenos Aires and the city of Cordoba. The main source of income is agricultural related businesses and factories.

In March 1988, Pastor Armando Ortiz and I began work there. At first our living quarters was a small camping trailer in the yard of an interested person in the community. We started our work by making personal contacts and visiting homes. We were greatly helped by the efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Osvaldo Aguilar, new members of the church in the nearby city of Canada de Gomez. The Aguilars were originally from Bell Ville and were able to provide us with the names of several friends and family members. These "people bridge" contacts plus other spontaneous contacts formed the basis of our ministry until October 1.

At the suggestion of the president of the neighborhood we had targeted to work, we applied to the municipality for permission to use a vacant property for a tent campaign. What we thought would be a simple process with a note of approval from the mayor turned out to be a real bureaucratic merry-go-round. Our request went from the mayor's office to the city council, to the planning department, to the legal department, etc., until it had made the rounds of all the city de-



*Bill Winter (l.) and Pastor Armando Ortiz with the camping trailer that served as their home away from home.*

partments. This, in a sense, was for the better, because we received the full and total approval of the city to carry out our work. Several months later the city council published an ordinance stating its authorization. The legal department then drew up a rent-free contract for one year, renewable for a second.

In July we secured the loan of a warehouse for a three-day activity. July is wintertime in Argentina, however, and the weather was terrible, so attendance was very poor. Even so, one person who came to those meetings has been one of our most faithful attenders of the tent campaign. Other contacts that came as a result of that seemingly unproductive activity have resulted in several families coming to the tent campaign.

When the contract to use the vacant property finally came through, cold weather had set in and a tent campaign was not advisable. Nevertheless, we set up the tent in Canada de Gomez to examine it. We discovered that the 15-year-old canvas was completely in shreds. The only usable piece was a portion purchased a number of years ago to start replacing the original canvas. This piece, however, was only big enough to cover the ends of the 22-by 48-foot structure. Through gifts and a loan, we were able to buy new canvas and renovate the tent.



*Sign at the entrance to the city.*

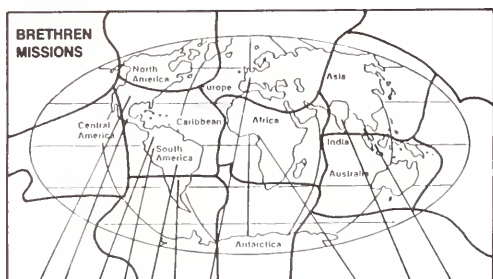
On September 29, 1988, the tent was raised in Bell Ville and made an immediate impact on the neighbors. We started a four-week campaign on Saturday, October 1. At the end of the four weeks, the people begged us to stay and not tear down the tent. We had originally planned to take a week's rest, then set up the tent in nearby Tortugas in November.

We decided to extend the campaign for a week, then evaluate through prayer what we should do. It became obvious that those who were to be saved had received the Lord during the first four weeks of the campaign. From then on the character of the activities changed to discipleship and consolidation. We continued to meet another week for a total of six weeks, then reduced the activities to Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays for the rest of the month of November.

We now have a solid group of about 40 adults and 25 children in Bell Ville. On Saturday, November 26, in response to an invitation from the church in Canada de Gomez, a group of 31 adults and 13 children rented a bus and traveled to Canada de Gomez. They were warmly received and enjoyed a special program and social. This activity contributed greatly to the forming of the group of individuals into a body of believers. It also helped build fraternal ties with the other churches.

Plans are now being made for this group's future. By the time you read this, the first baptism will have taken place in January. The group hopes this will be the beginning of efforts to officially organize as a church. Please continue to pray with us as this group works to become a point of outreach for The Brethren Church. [†]





# Abundant Blessings In India

By Brethren Missionary Rev. K. Prasanth Kumar

**WE** ARE greatly pleased to share with you the abundant blessings bestowed on our ministry by our Lord during 1988.

As I write this article it is the Christmas season, and we are very busy conducting Christmas gospel meetings every night in the surrounding villages. We were able to present the gospel through Christian films in several villages. This would not have been possible without the power generator, which enabled us to show these films in villages without electricity. We thank the Brethren in the United States who made this possible.

We had a very successful Brethren convention January 29-31, 1988. On the first day of the convention the youth had a special meeting, then the women had a special meeting the following afternoon. Nirmala was able to share the gospel with the many women in attendance. Each night we had special meetings, and I was joined by other speakers who shared in preaching the Word of God. During this time the Lord opened the hearts of 18 people, whom I was able to baptize.

The cottage prayer meetings we conducted every day from Ash Wednesday until Easter gave us rewarding results. The message of the Lord's crucifixion and resurrection was taken to many Hindus and Christians, and the Lord worked in many lives.

Our Sunday school and worship services are both enjoying an increase in attendance. The midweek Bible study and the Friday fasting intercessory prayer meetings are a great spiritual blessing to many in both Rajahmundry and Visakapatnam. We are also making progress in our state capital, Hyderabad, a city with a rich Muslim culture.

*Brethren Missions in India ministers to both soul and body. Above, Rev. Prasanth Kumar (l.) looks on as a doctor examines a villager with a chronic throat infection, while other patients wait their turns. Gifts to both Brethren Missions and World Relief make this medical outreach possible.*



It is a new experience for us to reach Muslims with the gospel.

We also work in cooperation with other evangelical churches. The Lord has opened new doors for a radio ministry. I was invited by the All India Radio station to deliver three biblical messages on universal brotherhood and peace. These were broadcast in July. I was also given the privilege of delivering the Christmas message on radio on December 24, 1988.

The year was marked by other special events. Special youth meetings were held in Rajahmundry on May 10 and in Visakapatnam on March 23. Many young people accepted Jesus as their Savior. We also held Thanksgiving festivals in these two cities in November. We used the occasion to present the gospel to the attenders through a series of messages.

Sickness and disease are the outward signs of the poverty, malnutrition, and poor sanitary conditions so prevalent here in India. We have done several things to help people overcome these problems. We have gone to the villages with our mobile medical unit and dispensed medicine to the sick. In both the villages and cities we have given food supplements, multivitamins, and glucose to the old,

the undernourished, and pregnant women.

For destitute women and unemployed youth we have created self-employment programs. This past year we presented sewing machines to three widows who completed our sewing classes. This will help them to provide for their children. We also gave a mobile laundry unit to a poor young man, who is now able to help support his family. We were able to give educational materials to some poor children in both Rajahmundry and Visakapatnam.

Following a fire accident in the village of Torredu, rice, which is our main staple, was given to the victims. We have distributed drinking water and buttermilk to thirsty travelers walking on the road when temperatures reached 118°. We also continue to care for 30 young boys at the Brethren Orphanage. The Brethren Mission, with the help of World Relief, is able to serve the poor, the sick, and the needy of India.

We express our deepest gratitude to all of the Brethren for making it possible to extend the Lord's Kingdom in India. We strongly believe our mission is the extension of your desire to carry on the Lord's command to "Go ye and preach." [†]

# Readers' Forum

A column in which readers can share their thoughts and views with the Brethren.

## Thank You for Lives that Were Changed

Dear Brethren:

Thirty years ago my parents stood before a congregation of Brethren, many of whom I have never met, some of whom were later to become my Sunday school and youth leaders. My parents pledged to raise me in the knowledge, love, and admonition of the Lord. The congregation promised to pray for and support my parents and me. Eight years later their prayers came to fruition when my parents asked if I understood what I was learning about Jesus and I accepted Him as my Lord and Savior.

Contemporary Christian singer Ray Boltz sings about a dream he has of being in heaven and having the opportunity to thank those who were instrumental in bringing him to the Lord. He sings, "Thank you for going to the Lord. / I have a life that was changed." I would just like to say the same to you, Brethren. "I have a life that was changed."

Recently one of my employees began quizzing me on spiritual matters. Soon we began meeting regularly to study the Scriptures and discuss her questions. Then sometime after midnight

on December 9 we knelt and Robin asked Jesus to be Lord of her life.

Two weeks later she wrote this poem in my Christmas card.

*Lost in a full yet empty world  
Earthbound  
to tragedy and truth  
And yet I was still called by Love  
A nameless yearning from above  
Alone in years of unbelief  
Self-bound  
to fear and desire  
Despite these things so seldom faced  
For mercy's sake still touched by  
grace*

*Into the light by Friendship led  
Salvation bound to sweet release  
With all my heart and all my head  
In fellowship and lasting peace  
To live a life of prayer and praise  
And follow Him for all my days*

Robin Hartman-Nixon

So, "Thank you, Brethren, for giving to the Lord. We have lives that were changed!"

Because of Him,

JEAN M. TROUP  
McClellan, Va.

Ms. Troup is a member of the Meadow Crest Brethren Church of Fort Wayne, Ind. She serves as director of Greentree Shelter in Bethesda, Md., a home for the homeless.

Our Lord has written the promise of the resurrection, not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime.

— Martin Luther

### How Well Do We Know Our Neighbors?

Across the street a moving van was parked on the front lawn.

She thought, "That's strange. One never knows just what's going on."

She just supposed that some new family was just now moving in.

"I'd love to find out who it is. But how do I begin?"

I know, I'll bake an apple pie, to sort of break the ice.

It doesn't hurt, once in a while, to do something that's nice."

So when the pie was ready, on the door she gave a knock.

"I baked an apple pie," she said, "And welcome to our block!"

The lady of the house was shocked, but said, "Well thank you, dear.

But we are moving out, not in. We never liked it here.

We thought four years ago that we were here to stay."

The lady with the pie said, "Well, enjoy it anyway."

She pondered what had just occurred, and this came to her mind:

"When neighbors don't communicate, results may be unkind."

There's an important message in this story of the pie:

To be a better neighbor, all of us should really try.

NORMAN MCPHERSON

Mr. McPherson is a member of the Gretna Brethren Church near Bellefontaine, Ohio. This poem was submitted to the EVANGELIST by his pastor, Rev. James F. Black.

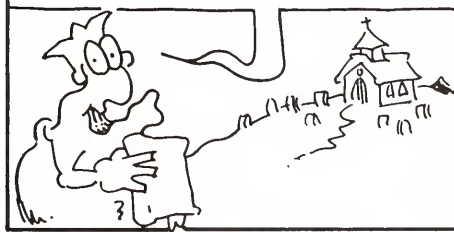


### Pontius' Puddle

DURING THE WEEK, I SOMETIMES  
FALTER IN MY FAITH. BUT WHEN I GO  
TO CHURCH, THE SINGING, SCRIPTURE,  
AND SERMON HELPS TO RESTORE MY  
CHRISTIAN  
COMMITMENT.



YOU COULD SAY GOD  
KNOWS HOW TO USE THE  
HOME COURT ADVANTAGE!



© Joel Kaufmann



### Ronald W. Waters Hired to Become Director of Breth. Ch. Ministries

**Ashland, Ohio** — The General Conference Executive Committee (GCEC) has announced that Rev. Ronald W. Waters has been hired to become the Brethren Church's first Director of Brethren Church Ministries.

Rev. Waters, currently pastor of the Mt. Olive Brethren Church of Pineville, Va., will assume this new position in June or early July of this year.

As Director of Brethren Church Ministries (DBCM), Waters will be responsible for giving visionary leadership to The Brethren Church by guiding, coordinating, and implementing the priorities and ministries mandated by General Conference and GCEC.

Specific responsibilities will include, among others, guiding GCEC in formation of long- and short-range plans for The Brethren Church as a whole and Brethren Church ministries specifically; overseeing ministry executives who are responsible for specific ministry areas; creating and maintaining channels of communication between local, district, and denominational levels; promoting the ministries of the church; overseeing the administration and management of the national offices; safeguarding and accounting for all funds, physical property, and other assets of The Brethren Church; facilitating the effective and efficient operation of General Conference week; and promoting and implementing actions taken by Conference.

Rev. Waters is singularly well-suited for this position, having both pastoral experience as well as extensive work experience at the denominational level of The Brethren Church.

Since July 1985 Waters has served as pastor of the Mt. Olive Brethren Church. During his four years at this church, the congregation has shown significant growth in both membership (from 146 in 1985 to 181 in 1988) and average worship attendance (from 77 in 1985 to 108 in 1988). Waters also served on the Southeastern District Mission Board while pastoring the Mt. Olive Church.

From 1971 to 1984 Waters served in various capacities at The Brethren Church denominational level. During this period he not only worked in The Brethren Church national office itself (from 1982 to 1984 as Director of Denominational Business), but also for



Ronald W. Waters

two of the four boards that are becoming a part of the denominational organization as a result of the General Conference-approved reorganization. From 1975 to 1984 he served in various capacities with the Brethren Publishing Company — managing editor of THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST (1975-78), assistant to the director, executive director and general manager. And from 1971 to 1974 he served as assistant to the director of the national Board of Christian Education.

Waters is also well-acquainted with the denominational structure that will result from the reorganization, for he served on the Polity Committee that

did much of the planning for this new structure. He also served as spokesman for this committee when the structure was presented to delegates at the 1988 General Conference.

The decision to hire Waters came following careful consideration of all candidates by a GCEC-appointed Search Committee (composed of James R. Black, Judi Gentle, Brian Moore, Conference Moderator Kenneth Sullivan, and Dale Stoffer, chairman). Waters, himself, did not apply for the position, but his name was submitted to the committee by someone else. (The Search Committee had encouraged such submissions through announcements in the EVANGELIST and *Leadership Letter*.) Believing that Waters was the best person for the position, the Search Committee prevailed upon him to accept the office.

The Search Committee's recommendation to the GCEC that Waters be hired was heartily accepted and unanimously approved by both voting and non-voting members of the Council.

Waters is a graduate of both Ashland College (B.A. in 1973) and Ashland Theological Seminary (M.Div., 1985), and he has a graduate degree in communications from Wheaton College Graduate School (M.A., 1976). He is married to the former Norma L. Grumbling of Johnstown, Pa., and he and Norma have an eight-year-old daughter, Melinda.

### Twenty-Two Young People to Serve As Summer Crusaders and Interns

**Ashland, Ohio** — The National Board of Christian Education has announced that 20 young people have been chosen to serve as Summer Crusaders in 1989, with two others to serve as Summer Interns.

The 20 Crusaders will serve on three teams: Education, Camp/Ed, and Music.

The Camp/Ed team will be captained by Mark Ray, a third-year crusader from Milford, Indiana. Second-year veteran crusaders Dawn Kidd, Harrisonburg, Virginia; Robert Wilson, Tucson, Arizona (Northwest Brethren Chapel); and Kim Marie Smith, Tucson, Arizona, will assist Mark. Newcomers Kelly Kroft, Ashland, Ohio (Garber), and Paula Teusch, Huntington, Indiana, will complete the team.

Kimberly Wilkins, a second-year

crusader from Tucson, Arizona, will captain the Education unit. She will be assisted by second-year veteran Brent Grimm from Milford, Indiana. First-year crusaders on the team will be Alyson Finks, Ashland, Ohio (Park Street); Tony Price, New Lebanon, Ohio; and Paul Sluss, Roanoke, Indiana.

John Howenstine will serve as captain for the Music team. He is a second-year crusader from the Trinity Brethren Church in North Canton, Ohio. Kurt Stout, a second-year crusader from Burlington, Indiana, will serve as the team's music captain. Assisting will be veterans Kimberly Wagoner, a third-year veteran from Elkhart, Indiana, and second-year veteran, Eric Bargerhuff, Mexico, Indiana. First-year members include

(continued on next page)

# Louisville Brethren Bible Church Erects and Dedicates Church Sign

Louisville, Ohio — Passers-by and visitors now know what, who, and when about the Louisville Brethren Bible Church, thanks to a new church sign that the congregation recently erected and dedicated.

The sign tells *what* the building is (Brethren Bible Church), *who* its pastor is (David E. Benshoff), and *when* Sunday school and worship services are held (9:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. respectively).

The need for the last — the times of service — was made abundantly evident to the congregation by one of life's embarrassing moments. One Sunday morning, just about ten minutes before the end of the worship service, a visitor walked in and sat down, just as the congregation was ready to stand for the final hymn. Following the service, she explained that she had looked for a sign with the times of service, but couldn't find one, so she came on in. She was quite embarrassed, but not half as embarrassed as the congregation.

This incident made it clear to the congregation that it had an outreach need that it was not meeting. So the deacon board drew up a proposal for a sign, the members approved the proposal, the trustees got an estimate (around \$1,500), some of the men in

the church used a trencher to lay the electric cable, and soon the sign was in place.

On Sunday, September 11, the congregation celebrated the completion of the new sign. During the worship service, Pastor Benshoff challenged the congregation with a vision of outreach and the realization that God had now provided them with a tool to make their church more visible in the community. Not only does the sign shine brightly at night (its lights are

on a dusk to dawn sensor), providing information about the church, it is situated so that it also lights up the entrance to the church property.

Following the celebration service, the congregation gathered on the front lawn to dedicate the sign to the glory of God. This, in turn, was followed by a fellowship dinner.

In spite of the new sign, the embarrassed visitor has not returned. But since the congregation erected the sign, the Lord has opened the door to eight new families. And the Brethren Bible congregation is trying even harder to listen to its visitors and to meet their needs.

— reported by Pastor David Benshoff



Dedication of the new church sign.

Photo by Frank Clapper.

## Crusaders and Interns

(continued from previous page)

Michelle Geaslen, Burlington, Indiana; Karen Robins, Tucson, Arizona; and Kristy Ashton, Oakville, Indiana.

A third-year veteran, Eric Schave, Milledgeville, Illinois, will serve as a Christian Education Intern. He will serve at Camp Bethany (the Ohio District Brethren Church camp) and at the New Lebanon Brethren Church.

Vanessa Oburn will serve as a Missionary Intern. She is a first-year crusader from Pleasant Hill, Ohio. Vanessa will serve for approximately eight weeks in Mexico City, Mexico.

All of the Summer Crusaders will meet April 8 in Ashland for INTRO DAY, during which they will choose team names, receive their summer work assignments, have pictures taken, and talk about their summer itineraries. Orientation Week will begin with Captains' training on June 9 and continue through June 17. The term of service runs from June 17 through August 11.

## AC Chapel Basement Undergoing Renovation

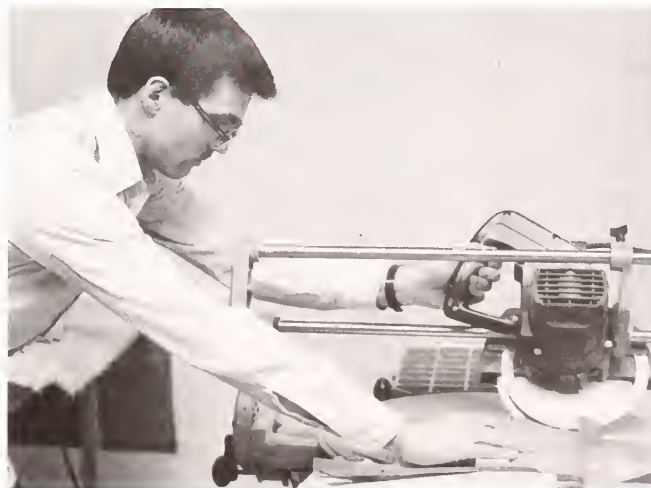
Ashland, Ohio — A \$50,000 renovation of the basement of the Ashland College Memorial Chapel — known as

the Salt Cellar — is expected to be completed by Easter.

The work, which began in early January and is being done by college carpenters and painters, is transforming the 36-year-old basement into an

(continued on next page)

AC carpenter Scot Millhouse, a member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, cuts molding for the chapel basement remodeling project.





From  
The



Grape  
Vine

The **Harold and Donna Nottingham Scholarship**, a major endowed scholarship, has been established at Ashland Theological Seminary with money received from the sale of a home in Boca Raton, Fla., which was given to the seminary by the Nottinghams. The late Mr. Nottingham was a dairy farmer in Oakville, Ind., where he was active in the Oakville First Brethren

## AC Chapel

*(continued from previous page)*

"efficient and attractive" center for campus religious activities, according to AC President Dr. Joseph R. Shultz.

The renovation work is the result of a \$50,000 gift from the estate of the late Dr. Eunice Dean, a 1945 AC graduate and an education professor at the college from 1954 through 1969. Also, local individuals, led by Ashland businessman Thomas Zupan, contributed to the building improvement effort.

The renovated basement will include a 150-seat meeting area, three offices, a restroom, and redone stairwells. A stained glass window will be featured, as well as new carpeting, lighting fixtures, and furniture.

"This will be a significant addition to the historical mission and goals of Ashland College," Shultz said. "The new facility will be the focal point of religious interest and activity on campus, and will increase the effectiveness of the ongoing religious life program."

Shultz, who noted that the chapel basement had been essentially unchanged since the structure was constructed in 1952, said the building was used to house classes following the 1954 fire that destroyed old Founders Hall, until a new facility was completed. Extensive renovation of the chapel's sanctuary, foyer, and stage was completed two years ago.

The Salt Cellar has been the primary meeting place for campus religious groups, including Hope Fellowship, Newman Catholic Club, and Fellowship of Christian Athletes, he added.

Church. Mrs. Nottingham continues to be active in the Oakville Church, where she is a member of the Woman's Missionary Society.

**Junior Youth of the Muncie, Ind., First Brethren Church** made \$50 for the national youth project February 11 by helping to prepare and then serving a candlelight St. Valentine's dinner to 30 people. Youth participating were Keith and Jason Weaver, Melanie and Ben Moorehead, Beth and Susan Briner, and youth leaders Penny Garrett and David and Darlene Moorehead.

A **Midwest District Men's Rally** was held November 4 and 5 at the Mulvane, Kans., Brethren Church. The rally included a session on goals, one on "Growing in the Church," and one on "Growing in Your Relationship

to God." The men voted unanimously to change the name of their district laymen's organization to "Men With a Mission," in response to Dr. Fred Finks' challenge at General Conference. They asked that each local laymen's group in the district likewise change its name.

A **Sweetheart Supper** was held February 18 at the Goshen, Ind., First Brethren Church. Wilbur Whittle prepared a meal of beef and noodles, and Charlene Rowser led a sing-along, accompanied by Shirley Puro.

The following **Nappanee, Ind., Brethren** read the Bible through in 1988: Maryellen Best, Freida Bowers, Joanne Bowers, Verna Lou Hostetter, Linda Pippen, Marjorie Sechrist, Beulah Temple (her ninth consecutive year!), and Joy Weybright.

## Oak Hill Laymen's Bake-Off Raises Money for the Needy

**Oak Hill, W. Va.** — Nearly \$150 was raised for the needy on February 4 at the annual Laymen's Bake-Off Auction at the Oak Hill First Brethren Church.

Men and boys of the congregation made baked goods, which were auctioned off to members and friends of the church. Prior to the auction, the baked goods were judged by three women of the congregation — Ollie

Foy, Kathleen Burton, and Gene Skeldon. Mike Pomeroy's cake was judged prettiest, Bob Crouch's as most original, and Paul Fox's as most unusual.

Others who made baked items included Kenneth Nuckels, Jeff Nuckels, Pastor Bill Skeldon, Tommy Burton, Burl Burton, Jason Crouch, and Gary Crouch. Pastor Bill Skeldon gave devotions prior to the auction, and Paul Fox served as the auctioneer. Mona and Jeanette Nuckels graciously did the clean-up work for the men.

— reported by Gene Skeldon

## In Memory

**Ralph Steele**, 82, February 4. Faithful attendee of the Raystown Brethren Church, which he served by doing building repairs and by making various items of church furniture. Services by Rev. Allen Baker and Alfred Chamberlain.

**Lucille Wehrley**, 67, February 3. Member since 1963 of the Dayton Hillcrest Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Weston Ellis.

**John Hoffman**, 81, February 2. Member for 35 years and trustee for many years of the Raystown Brethren Church. Services by Rev. Allen Baker and Rev. Bruce Hartman.

**Charles Lemert**, 62, February 2. Member since 1938 of the Teegarden First Brethren Church. Services by Rev. Claude Stogsdill, assisted by Rev. Robert Stafford.

**Max B. Mullendore**, 68, January 31. Member for many years of the Flora First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Alvin Grumbling.

**George Dewey Pratt**, 91, January 16. Faithful attendee for 14 years of the Oak Hill First Brethren Church, where he served as an usher. Services by Oak Hill Brethren Pastor William Skeldon.

**Laurel "Bud" Shrock**, 77, January 15.

Member of the Loree Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Claude Stogsdill and Rev. George Wallace.

**Mary Leidy**, 87, January 14. Member of the Vinco Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Carl Phillips.

**Harvey C. Bowman**, 96, December 21. Member since 1906 of the Elkhart First Brethren Church and oldest living member of the congregation until his death. Services by Pastor Daniel Gray.

**Flossie M. Yauger**, 87, December 21. Member for 73 years of the Masontown Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Russell King.

## Goldenaires

**Kenneth H. and Donnabelle Myer**, 50th, February 12. Members of the Flora First Brethren Church.

## Membership Growth

**Warsaw**: 3 by baptism

**Oak Hill**: 5 by baptism

**Teegarden**: 1 by baptism

**Pleasant View**: 1 by baptism

**Linwood**: 11 by baptism, 1 by transfer

**Smoky Row**: 4 by baptism, 1 by transfer

# Little Crusader

**Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).**

## THE LORD IS RISEN INDEED!

The Book of Luke records that "Very early on Sunday morning the women went to the tomb, carrying the spices they had prepared." They expected to find the lifeless body of the Jesus they loved so much. How surprised they must have been to find "two men in bright shining clothes"! How their mouths must have dropped open in amazement! They must have felt as if they would burst with joy when they heard the good news that Jesus had risen from the grave. Yes, their Jesus was indeed alive. At Easter we recall that day and remember that He died and lives again for us, too.

### FRIENDS WHO SAW JESUS AFTER HIS RESURRECTION

The "Gospels" (the first four books of the New Testament, which tell about Jesus) record that Jesus was seen by many of His friends after He arose from the grave. See if you can find, in the jumbled letters below, the names of some of those friends who saw Him.

**Find these names.**

CLEOPAS      NATHANAEL  
MARY          SALOME  
PETER        THOMAS

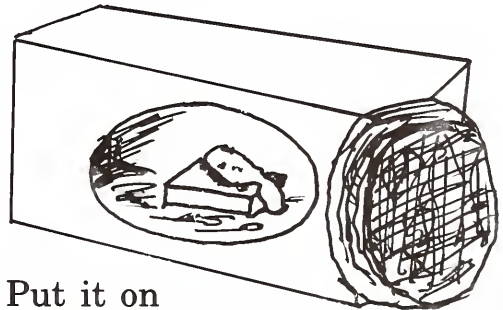


M A R C L E O P A S U D T H O H S N  
S A P M S E M O R L K T H N A U P M  
F R I N A T H A N A E L M A R Y P E  
P E T E R R Y L P M O L T H O M A S  
P O L M A S A L O M E P A S T H A N

### AN EMPTY TOMB CRAFT

Here is a craft you can do alone, with friends, or with your family.

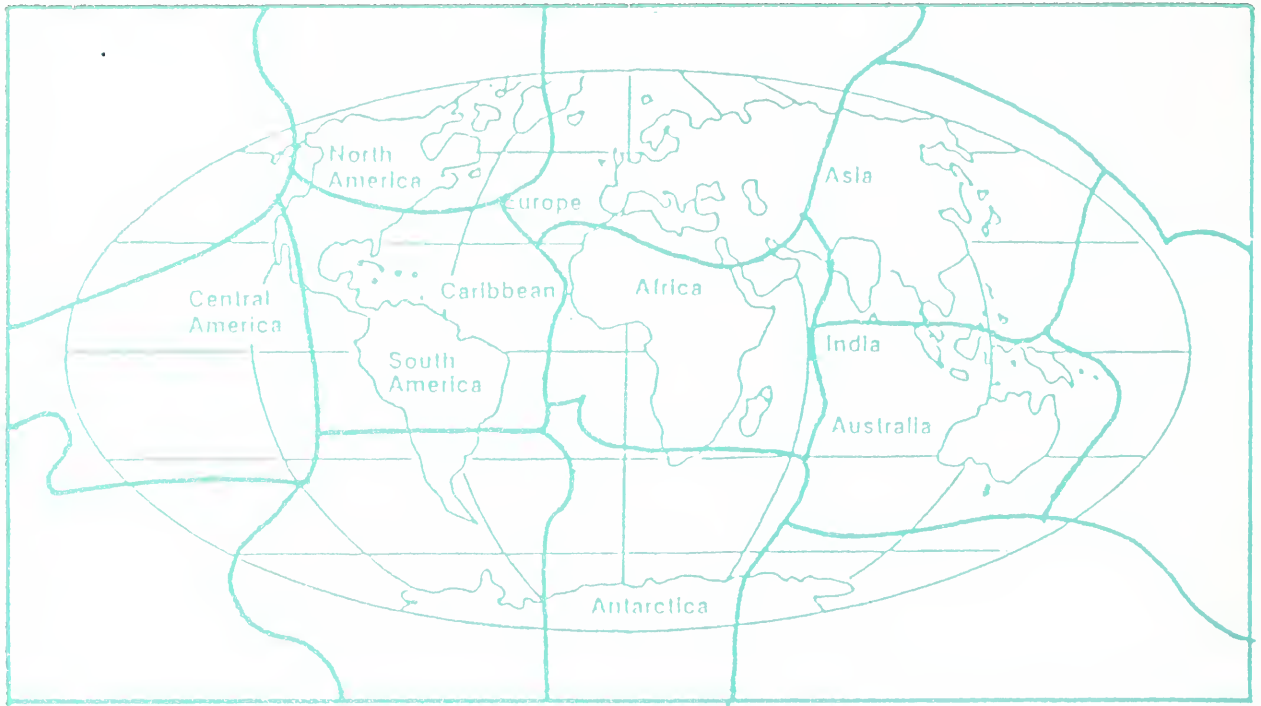
1. Find an empty tissue box or shoe box. Cut a large hole in the top. (If you use a tissue box, you can use the hole the tissues were pulled through, but you may need to make it larger.)
2. Cover the outside of the box with brown or black construction paper, or use brown or black crayons to color it. Jesus' tomb was probably part of a cave. This box will represent the tomb. The hole is the entrance.
3. Find a big stone, or tape two margarine tub lids together, top to top. This will represent the huge rock that covered the entrance to the tomb, but which was already rolled away when the women arrived.
4. Find a small box (a Jello, paperclip, or pudding box), and cover it with brown or black construction paper. This represents the stone slab inside the tomb on which they laid Jesus' body. Glue your "stone slab" to the "floor" of the "tomb."
5. Find a small piece of white fabric or white tissue or toilet paper. This represents the "grave clothes" that were wrapped around Jesus' body. Dot your "grave clothes" with red marker to represent the blood of Jesus that had surely gotten on the grave clothes. Glue the "grave clothes" to the top of the "stone slab."



Put it on  
your kitchen table  
as a reminder of Jesus' resur-  
rection.



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# THE BRETHREN **Evangelist**

APRIL 1989



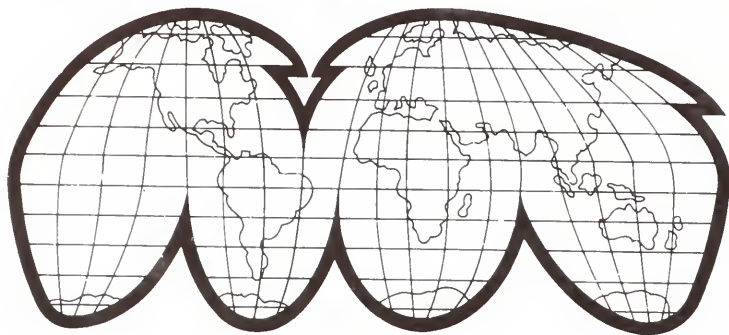
*If God hath made this world so fair,  
Where sin and death abound,  
How beautiful, beyond compare,  
Will paradise be found!*

— James Montgomery





# Developing a Global Vision



by  
**John  
Maust**

## Nothing to Lose

**"NOTHING TO LOSE"** — that's what observers said about the people who went out looting during the recent outbreak of racial violence in Miami, Florida.

In other words, many of them didn't especially care if they got arrested for breaking a store window and stealing a television set. They had no job to lose, family to sacrifice, or career to risk. So why not just "go for it"?

### Long arrest records

A black pastor and policeman in Miami, Jimmie Brown, told me that many of the people detained in the January disturbances already had long arrest records. "These were not the people out looking for jobs," he said.

Henry Nevin, Baptist pastor in Miami's predominately black Overtown neighborhood, said the violence reminded him of the need to provide education and jobs for the poor.

"The doctors, lawyers, and school-teachers in my congregation weren't the ones out there throwing rocks," he said in an interview. Such people *do* have something to lose if they get into trouble with the law, he noted.

We see the same pattern repeating itself in other parts of the world. For instance, leftist terrorists still attract some followers among the dirt-poor *campesinos* in parts of rural Colombia and Peru. Again, the reason often given is: They have nothing to lose.

The peasant eking out a subsist-

ence living on a tiny plot of land in the Andes Mountains sees no escape from his misery and destitution. So why not join the guerrillas and fight for a better life by doing away with the oppressors? "So what if the police or soldiers kill us?" the thinking goes. "We'll probably die young anyway from hunger or disease."

Talking with a Pakistani Christian friend the other day, I heard the "nothing to lose" syndrome from a different angle. Salim said that the more fanatical Pakistani Muslims had no qualms about rioting against the controversial book *The Satanic Verses*.

If they got killed in the process (as some did), they believed theirs would be a martyr's death and they would go straight to heaven. In other words, they had nothing to lose and everything to gain.

We could cite many other examples. But suffice it to say, people with nothing to lose can be pretty dangerous sometimes.

### What can Christians lose?

So what does this have to do with us Christians?

First, I'm struck by our need as Christians to offer God's hope to some of these desperate people with nothing to lose. We, if anyone, have good news for a suffering world.

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have," wrote the Apostle Peter.

But I'm particularly struck that Christians, more than anyone

perhaps, should know what it means to have nothing to lose.

Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ, Scripture says. Indeed, no one can steal our salvation.

If God is for us, who can be against us? People might tease or make fun of our Christian witness, but they cannot take away God's love and support for us.

---

***"I'm struck by our need as Christians to offer God's hope to some of these desperate people with nothing to lose."***

---

There's something incredibly freeing in the fact that we are in God's care and that we have nothing eternal that we can lose.

So we Christians can serve God without fear. Maybe we can even take a few risks in the process — do something for God that might seem a little "crazy" every now and then.

I know I'm guilty of wasting energy trying to protect my comfort zone and the material things I will eventually lose.

### Tacos and testimony

Several years ago, I took part in an evangelistic outing with The Brethren Church to Tijuana, Mexico. We had spent the entire day promoting and showing some Christian films, and at 11:00 p.m. we were packing up the equipment. We hadn't eaten supper, and my stomach was growling like a Mexico City earthquake.

We noticed a young man hanging around in the shadows and asked if we could help. He seemed to want to talk about spiritual things, but I couldn't hear him very well because supper was calling.

After a brief conversation, we finally told him to come back the next day if he wanted to talk. (He didn't.) That night my supper didn't taste very good. Had I put a few greasy tacos before a God-given chance to lead a person toward Christ — toward something he could not lose?

The late Jim Elliot's saying has almost become a missions cliché. But it bears repeating: "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." [†]

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*by Mark and Chantal Logan*

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## Note About World Relief Giving:

Page 16 gives a detailed report of Brethren giving to World Relief during 1988. It also reports that The Brethren Church sent \$65,000 to World Relief Corporation of the National Association of Evangelicals last year. At the NAE Convention held March 7-9 in Columbus, Ohio, The Brethren Church was given a plaque recognizing it as one of the top eleven churches in total giving to World Relief Corporation (WRC) in 1988. The Brethren Church was one of five churches honored for giving between \$50,000 and \$100,000 to WRC. Six additional churches were honored for giving more than \$100,000.

**Attention Laymen:** On pages 17 and 18 of this issue you will find a proposed new constitution and bylaws for the men's group of The Brethren Church. You are encouraged to read and study this information in preparation for action upon it during the men's auxiliary sessions at General Conference in August.

## Answers to Little Crusader Page:

King David's Message: "The world and all that is in it belong to the Lord; the earth and all who live on it are His."



# Why A Brethren Church In Colombia?

By Mark and  
Chantal Logan

**A**S OUR TIME in Colombia comes to an end,\* an evaluation seems appropriate. Yet we hesitate to draw conclusions about our work, recognizing that our conclusions may be either too pretentious or too modest, or possibly just plain wrong. God's criteria are so different from ours that what we think important may appear to Him completely irrelevant, and what we believe insignificant could be in His sight the most important thing we have done.

If we cannot make a proper evaluation of our work, we can at least share with you what has been our intention — what it is that we have tried to accomplish. It might surprise you to learn that a country boy (an electronic technician) and a French girl (a philosophy student) — two lay people who never saw the inside of a seminary — had as their primary goal the establishment of a truly Brethren Church in Colombia. Yet after living in Colombia for 13 years and having watched both the evangelical and socio-political scene,

*\*The Logans, Brethren missionaries serving in Bogotá, Colombia, plan to conclude their missionary service in Colombia later this year (around mid-year). They will be returning to the United States, where they will pursue further studies while seeking God's direction for future ministry.*

we are thoroughly convinced that Colombia needs to hear the particular message of The Brethren Church.

We want to note immediately that this statement is not made with the narrow-minded and intolerant attitude of those who say, "We are the only church which has the truth." Both of us have been deeply involved in interdenominational ministries, Mark with SERVICOM and Chantal with Prison Fellowship. We believe strongly in the need for the various churches to cooperate with one another.

In fact, Mark was one of the founders of the ministerial association in Medellín, which brings together pastors from all evangelical churches. Likewise, here in Bogotá he is a member of the founding committee for a ministerial association. It is crucial for the integrity of the Christian message that all evangelicals work together. But possibly it is because of the very fact that we have cooperated and worked with practically all the evangelical groups in Colombia that we are aware of the needs of the evangelical community and of the ways in which our unique Brethren heritage can enrich the life of this community.



**Why a de-  
mis-**

**nomination  
sion?**

To start with, we have discovered the value of doing mission work within the boundaries and under the authority of a denomination. It seems that there is a widespread but naive point of view that we should establish "Christian" churches rather than denominational churches, "preach Christ but don't mention the mission's particular background." "We must not be biased." This point of view has produced a proliferation of independent churches and mission organizations.

But this point of view brings results contrary to its intent. If we are honest, we will admit that we all have our own biases, our own emphases, our own theology, and, as missionaries, our own cultural prejudices. If it is true that any church takes on the personality of its pastor, this is even more true of a newly planted church. The people who



*Mark and Chantal Logan with their three children, (l. to r.) Lawrence (13), John Mark (16), and Rebecca (17).*

make up such an infant church are new Christians whose only point of reference in such important matters as how to interpret the Scriptures is the leader who founded the congregation. If it were not for the sovereign action of the Holy Spirit, all the churches we plant would bear our name and only our name.

In denominational work our personal biases are balanced by the general teachings of the denomination. More important yet, as denominational missionaries, we are less prone to theological fads. We have a history behind us that helps us distinguish between sound theological teaching and popular, spur-of-the-moment tendencies; between eternal truths and temporal/cultural ones.

A church planter who does not have a strong sense of denominational identity or who does not have any denominational or theological tradition at all will be more easily "tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching . . ." And so will his converts. Therefore what actually happens is that the church he plants is a lot less universal and a lot more biased; it has a lot less "of Christ" and a lot more of "somebody else."

### Why a Brethren mission?

Besides the problem of the proliferation of independent groups started by non-denominational missionaries, we have also seen in Colombia a lack of teaching on the importance of discipleship. Evangelism, as the Brethren understand it, is not just making a decision or raising your hand. It is fundamentally and primarily a matter of making disciples, as is clearly stipulated in the Great Commission. But most churches here think that when somebody comes forward, evangelism is finished — when actually it has only just begun. What happens, as a result, is that many people make first-time decisions but never follow up on that decision and have no idea of what it means to live the Christian life. To become an evangelical has indeed meant a change of religion, but it has not meant a change of life. Such people are no longer Roman Catholics, but their concept of the church has not changed. They still think that what counts is *going to* "church," not *being* the church.

During the violent persecution in the 1950's, the Colombian Christians were indeed true disciples, be-

cause they knew and paid the cost of discipleship. But when Colombia became more tolerant of evangelicals, the door was opened to theological fads, as mentioned above. Unfortunately, what has entered has been the sensationalist, success-oriented, number-obsessed kind of evangelism based on a sales pitch rather than on a call to costly Christianity.

Because of the present turbulent political situation and the uncertainty of the future, many churches and church leaders are rediscovering the importance of discipleship. Some Colombian church leaders are even talking of the need for persecution as a means to purify the church. But persecution or not, discipleship should always be preached, not as an option but as an integral part of the message of salvation. The Brethren Church in Colombia can help the Colombian church in her need to rediscover this truth. But for Brethren themselves it should never be a rediscovering experience, rather a constant proclamation.

Another big challenge that the evangelical church in Colombia faces today is the socio-economical and political turmoil of the country. The violence in Colombia has reached unbelievable proportions. In the first two weeks of this year, there were an estimated 300 homicides (in a country with one tenth the population of the U.S.). Reports of massacres have become common news events. Someone is killed every three hours in Medellín. One would think that the situation would have to improve, but the opposite is happening. Human life has become cheap; to some it is worth nothing at all.

As Christians our first concern should not be for our own safety, but rather what we can do to help stop the bloodshed. Unfortunately, many evangelicals are unconcerned about the situation because the violence is not directed specifically towards them. They are not willing to take the risk involved in doing something. (Again the problem is not having been taught a costly discipleship).

Brethren again have something to offer. Many people in the United States don't see the value of the non-





violent heritage of The Brethren Church and instead associate the idea of being a pacifist with being unpatriotic or liberal. Nevertheless, we believe that the strong and uncompromising stand of the Brethren for non-violence is the only stand that the church can take today (especially, but not only, in Colombia). Any compromise or middle-of-the-road position will not do.

### The whole strength of the gospel

To face the extreme situation we live in here takes the whole strength of Christ's gospel. Thou shalt not kill is not enough. It takes "love thy enemy," "if your enemy is hungry, feed him . . ." and "overcome evil with good" to do the job. The sanctity of human life, of *all* human life, has to be preached, proclaimed, and practiced. It might sound like suicide, especially here, but to our forefathers who practiced it, it was simply faithfulness.

We could not teach and witness in prison if we believed that some types of prisoners should be executed. Actually, if they deserve to be killed, so do we because we are all sinners. If we are alive, it is only because of the saving grace of Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:23). Besides, how can we preach saving grace to somebody who is dead? In the jail we can boldly and truthfully say to any of the prisoners, "Because we are Christian and Brethren, we believe that you should neither kill nor be killed. Both are wrong."

Although the problem of violence in Colombia is very complex, one of its causes is the flagrant social injustice. Perhaps because of the liberal theology of the "social gospel" prevalent in the United States, many missionaries were afraid to teach the social dimension of being a

Christian. Therefore they emphasized doctrine rather than practice.

But you never rectify an error by committing one. By neglecting to teach the responsibility of Christians in the social sphere (which comes under the very simple command of "love thy neighbor"), these missionaries failed to provide a biblical framework for Christians who are concerned about social justice. Such Christians then naturally turn to liberation theology.

### A solid basis

Here again our Anabaptist heritage gives us a solid basis upon which to speak to this particular issue. The Brethren never saw any conflict between ministering to the body and ministering to the soul. Brethren have never needed a "social gospel" in order to know and fulfill their responsibility to the less fortunate. The command to "love thy neighbor" has been a traditional teaching and practice of Brethren throughout our existence.

This command has always been understood to mean that we must share our material wealth as well as our faith. The fact that The Brethren Church is one of the top NAE denominations in giving to World Relief speaks for itself. This view of Christian responsibility combined with Brethren teaching on non-conformity, which we interpret today as a condemnation of materialism and the adoption of a simple lifestyle (making sharing with others more feasible), provides a solid basis for social justice.

We are very thankful for what the *Centennial Statement* has to say about these issues. We can teach people that you can be concerned about social justice without turning to liberation theology, joining a revolutionary group, being called a Communist, or actually becoming one. Brethren teaching on social justice provides the necessary guidelines because it stipulates the conditions of the fight for justice — respect for the law and the importance of adopting a non-resistant attitude if, under very special circumstances, one breaks the law. When we couple our teaching on social justice with the Brethren doctrine of respect for all human life, we have a solid foundation from

which to help concerned but confused Christians find answers to difficult and pressing issues.

There are many other aspects of The Brethren Church which can help orient the Colombian evangelical community in its growth and maturation, but it would take too much space to mention them all here. Because of our conviction of the value of the Brethren heritage, we have used our deep involvement with other evangelical groups as a means to influence them and to help them find sound biblical answers to the challenges they face today. As we have discovered the importance of our identity, we have joined forces with other churches with Anabaptist roots who have also come to realize that they were shortchanging their people by neglecting to teach their heritage. Actually, to be honest we must admit that the people of our own churches also pushed us to teach them what it means to be Brethren, thus forcing us to dig into Brethren history and Brethren teaching.

As we leave Colombia and consider other possible fields of missionary service, we know that wherever we go we will want to plant Brethren churches. If we Brethren are not going to take our identity to the mission field, then we don't have any reason to have our own Missionary Board. After all, wouldn't it be better for our missionary candidates to go to big missionary societies that have piles of money and to join forces with them? Why be just another "little group"?

### We can be salt and light

But if we are not afraid to be who we are; if we are not willing to let ourselves be swallowed up by the popular but passing trends of the great majority; then we can indeed be what we have been called to be. We can be salt and light, not only among non-Christians, but perhaps even more importantly, among the growing Christian communities.

For our message to have any validity, however, we need to show that it works. This means churches teaching Brethren doctrine both at home and abroad. But most of all it means people counting the cost and living the Brethren life. Brothers and sisters, Let us be Brethren. [†]

# GIVING: The Role, The Gift, The Giver

By Dan Lawson

**“ECONOMISTS Say Inflation Will Skyrocket!” “Major Recession Just Around the Corner!” “89: A Bad Year For Investors.”**

These are but a few of the headlines that have appeared in newspapers and business journals across our nation. An entire country holds its economic breath as a new administration takes over the White House. Millions of people desperately seek an investment that will provide a sound return on their dollar, and many more are simply wondering if the little they have will be enough to provide their bare essentials.

But what if I were to make you an offer that you couldn't refuse? What if I could guarantee you an investment that would give you an interest rate of 1,000 percent? How much money would you be willing to invest? What about an interest rate of 100 percent?

The truth of the matter is that in today's economy we would jump at a savings account that would offer a 10 percent interest rate. I'm sure we all would agree, however, that it would be foolish to invest at 10 percent if we could get 1,000 percent, or even 100 percent.

Yet, we often treat our spiritual investments with an insincerity that is unheard of in our financial matters. Why is this true? Are we willing to admit that we have a double standard? Do we handle our personal finances one way and our giving to God's work in another? These are questions with which all of us

should struggle, for we will be held accountable when we come face to face with God.

In Mark chapter 12, Jesus draws His disciples' attention to a woman who had the spiritual gift of giving. We read that Jesus sat outside the Temple and saw a poor widow presenting a gift of love to God. Jesus told His disciples, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others" (Mk. 12:43, NIV). From this we learn that the spiritual gift of giving is not determined by the amount given, but rather by the sincerity of the giver's heart.

## Giving for the wrong reasons

Too often those who contribute to the weekly offering in the local church do so for the wrong reasons. Ernest Blevins, a Sunday school teacher in Westlake Village, California, tells how he handed out sheets of colored paper to his class and told the children to share the lone pair of scissors on the table.

"What does share mean?" he asked. He heard one little boy ask his neighbor. "Share," his friend whispered back, "is what you do when you have only one of something and the teacher is looking."

Let's be honest: How often have you felt you had to make your weekly offering because God might be looking?

In his discussion of the spiritual gift of giving, Dr. C. Peter Wagner writes: "As I read the Scriptures, I have to conclude that a tithe, meaning 10 percent of one's income off the top, is the bare minimum for exercising the role of giving." By "role" he means the responsibility every Christian has by virtue of his or her faith. Dr. Wagner goes on to state that "The average giving for Chris-

tians in America is something around \$145 per year. Yet, the average salary is considerably more than \$1,450." He tells how he once calculated that if every member of his home church were on welfare and tithed, the church's income would go up by 40 percent.<sup>1</sup>

As good, upstanding citizens of the United States of America, we would not think of defaulting on our taxes. (For most of us this is more out of fear of Uncle Sam than from a sense of patriotic duty.) Yet, we see that giving to God was a part of the Old Testament law. Leslie Flynn points out: "If a person under law was required to give 10%, should not those under grace give gladly and gratefully above and beyond the legal tithe?"<sup>2</sup> If we are faithful about paying our taxes, why are we not more faithful about returning to God what is rightfully His?

## Tithing as an investment

Earlier in this article I asked how much money you would invest if you could be certain of getting a 1,000 percent return on your investment. Consider your tithe as an investment, 10 percent off the top. Recognize, also, that all that you have comes from God. Looking at the tithe in this way suggests that the 10 percent investment you make in the work of God is multiplied by 1,000% and returned to you in the form of your weekly paycheck.

If we are totally honest about our faith, we must admit that the earth is the Lord's and all that is contained therein. That goes for our bank accounts as well. Is it wrong of God to ask us to return a portion of what He has loaned us, so that His work might continue?

If you went down to the local bank, wouldn't you be required to

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*Rev. Lawson is pastor of the Oakville, Ind., First Brethren Church.*

*This article was written at the request of the General Conference Stewardship Committee, of which Rev. Lawson is a member.*



***"The average Christian keeps asking, 'How much should I give to the Lord?' But a Christian with the spiritual gift of giving asks, 'How much of God's money should I keep?'"***

pay closing costs for a loan? In other words, you have to give some of the money back to the bank at the outset simply for the privilege of using its money. We shouldn't consider our weekly paychecks any differently. They are a loan from God. After all, He has made it possible for us to earn those paychecks.

All the above arguments are aimed at convincing us that we should tithe. But sooner or later we will have to come down to the bottom line — faith. God does not intend us to tithe out of a sense of duty or obligation. The case of the poor woman who gave only two copper coins makes it obvious that God wants us to give with cheerful hearts.

God loves a cheerful giver. When we give cheerfully and out of the depths of our faith, we can experience Luke 6:38 literally: "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over . . ."

Such giving works so well that I have never met a Christian who began to tithe and then went back to not tithing. In fact, most people who tithe have told me that they can't afford *not* to tithe. This is because they have experienced the faithfulness of God.

### **Giving as a spiritual gift**

But the *spiritual gift* of giving is something more than the basic tithe spoken of above. A tithe is the minimum amount a Christian should give. But the spiritual gift of giving goes beyond the minimum standard. The average Christian keeps asking, "How much should I give to the Lord?" But a Christian with the spiritual gift of giving asks, "How much of God's money should I keep?"<sup>3</sup>

We have all heard stories of great people with the spiritual gift of giving. R. G. LeTourneau is one such person. He gave 90 percent of the assets of his company to his Christian foundation. Then he and his wife

gave to the Lord's work, in cash, 90 percent of the income they realized from the ten percent share of the business that he kept. He and his wife never lacked.<sup>4</sup>

### **Discovering our gift**

But how do we know if we have been given the spiritual gift of giving? Wagner's five E's for discovering one's spiritual gifts can help us.

First of all, **Explore** the possibility. How will you know if you don't first believe it is possible.

Second, **Experiment**. Give it a fair shake. Try giving more than the simple tithe. Your money will not be wasted, and if you consider it an investment with God, your reward will be amazing. God never goes back on His word. Remember Luke 6:38.

Third, **Examine** your feelings. Do you give cheerfully? How do you feel about giving to God? Do you get a blessing from giving? Findley Edge says that a Christian who finds God's calling through his or her gift will get a "eureka feeling," that is, the feeling that "This is what I'd rather do for God than anything else in the world."<sup>5</sup>

Fourth, **Evaluate** your effectiveness. Has the church grown as a result of your giving? Has the need that you gave to been met? Has your gift of giving helped to spread the gospel in any way? We can expect to see results when we are faithful in answering God's call.

Finally, **Expect** confirmation from the Body (the church). We, as Christians, should confirm the gifts that we see in the lives of our fellow Christians. This goes for the gift of giving as well. We should encourage those who give and make them aware of the good that their gifts are accomplishing.

If you are wondering if you have the spiritual gift of giving, you have nothing to lose by *giving* it a try.

The University of Oregon, in soliciting support from its alumni, shared the following story with them.

When the King of Siam came to America for an eye operation some years ago, his American surgeon, accustomed to setting prices somewhat according to the patient's ability to pay, couldn't decide exactly how much to charge His Royal Highness — \$1,000 to be a good neighbor; \$5,000 to match his usual fee; or \$10,000 to prove the operation worth the trip. After all, a king is a king.

Someone suggested that he check with the king's New York lawyer, who might have some thoughts on the matter. So he did.

"No problem," said the lawyer. "The king is an honorable man. Like you, he understands value. Simply send him an invoice with no amount indicated, and then add a handwritten footnote saying, 'The king can do no wrong.'"

He did. Back came a check for \$75,000! The surgeon was overjoyed. He bought his wife a mink coat, ordered two new Cadillacs, and blew the rest on a three-month trip around the world.

Upon arriving home, his pocket-book flattened, but happy and refreshed, he opened his mail. In it was a bill from the lawyer — with no amount indicated but including a handwritten footnote: "The honorable doctor can do no wrong."

### **God's invoice**

Although we may laugh at this story, its moral strikes home. God has performed a very delicate operation for us. It's called salvation. He has sent His invoice to us personally. No amount is specified. There's simply a footnote written by a nail-pierced hand with the blood of the cross. It reads, "This honorable Christian can do no wrong." [†]

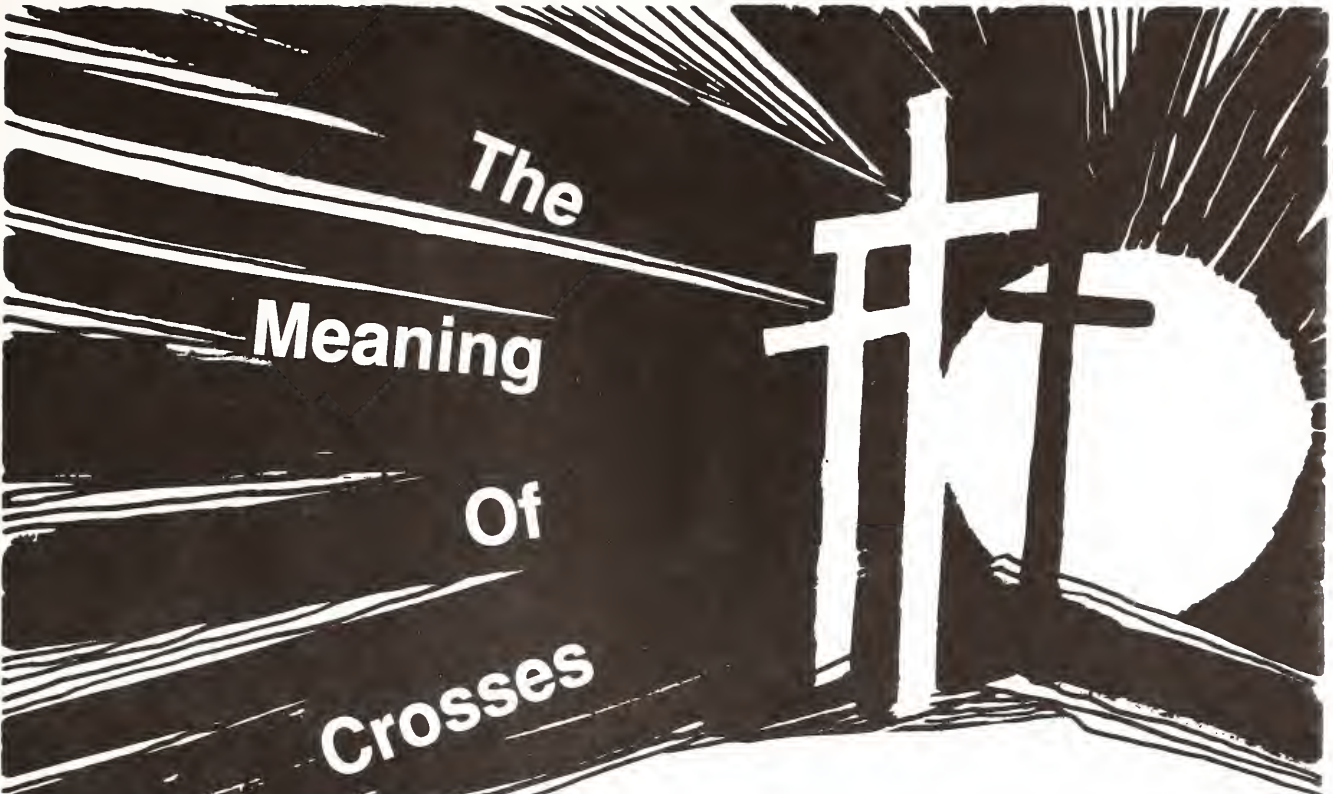
<sup>1</sup>Dr. C. Peter Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* (Ventura Ca.: Regal Books, 1979), p. 93.

<sup>2</sup>Leslie B. Flynn, *19 Gifts of the Spirit* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1974), p. 117.

<sup>3</sup>Wagner, pp. 94-95.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Findley B. Edge, *The Greening of the Church* (Waco: Word Books, 1971), p. 141.



# The Meaning Of Crosses

By  
Charles  
Lowmaster

**J**ESUS gave one of the clearest, most pointed definitions of the church and of Christian identity to His disciples in Caesarea Philippi (recorded in Matthew 16:13 ff.). His words, "If any one wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (v. 24\*), capture in capsule form the nature of Christian commitment. These words call us to evaluate the meaning and goals of life and the process of attaining those goals.

### Three philosophies

Three philosophies of life are easily identifiable. The first two, Stoicism and Epicureanism, dominated Greek society. The third is a product of the teaching of Christ.

\*Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the *New American Standard Bible*.

*Rev. Lowmaster is a retired Brethren pastor living in Louisville, Ohio.*

Stoicism sees life as a product of random selection, with no ultimate goal. Life is hard and cruel. Each individual must set his own goals, then grit his teeth and fight his way toward the attainment of those goals.

Epicureanism sees the attainment of personal happiness as the ultimate goal of life. The slogan of the Epicureans might well be, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you may die." Since what you experience here is all there is to life, the Epicurean might well say, "When you live, you live in clover; / When you're dead, you're dead all over." Pain, suffering, and crosses cannot be accommodated within Epicureanism.

The Christian sees life as having purpose and moving toward a worthy goal — the Kingdom of God. The cross of Christ and His resurrection open a window to a whole new dimension. Certainly peace and happiness are to be desired, but in order to attain them one may be required to endure some pain.

### The Christian goal

The Christian pursues a goal that is not of his own making, but which comes from God. Those who pursue their own causes may profit by

earthly standards.

But if the Christian belief in the Kingdom of God is true, and the unbeliever makes no provision to enter that Kingdom, then whatever that unbeliever attains in life will be found sorely inadequate in the end.

Crosses have been adopted by Christians as a means of identification. We wear them on chains, bracelets, and pins. We decorate our homes and our churches with them.

Some Christians have interpreted Jesus' words to mean that unless they literally bear some cross of suffering or pain, something is wrong with their faith. This is a masochistic approach to faith and life. I do not believe that Jesus intended that a person should deliberately seek a cross.

### What did Jesus mean?

So what did Jesus mean when He said, "If any one wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me"? Crosses may be either the adversities that stand in the way of reaching life's goal, or the means by which that goal is attained.

Jesus' cross is an excellent example. Jesus' ultimate objective is to build a kingdom. Since the only way people can be prepared for that king-





***"The cross of Christ and His resurrection open a window to a whole new dimension. Certainly peace and happiness are to be desired, but in order to attain them one may be required to endure some pain."***

dom is by doing something about their sin, God sent His Son to make atonement for their sin by means of His sacrifice on a cross. Jesus' cross, therefore, was the means by which His goal was to be achieved.

From the human standpoint, however, the cross was an obstacle to the kingdom, because if Jesus would not "deny Himself, and take up His cross," the door to the kingdom would remain closed. Jesus modeled His teaching by telling His disciples "that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day" (Matt. 16:21).

Two human tendencies are easily discernible in the Christian community. The first is to avoid crosses at all cost. The second is to deliberately seek a cross to bear.

It is perfectly logical to try to avoid suffering. Crosses are cruel, and only the masochist receives any pleasure from suffering. But sometimes the only way to reach a goal is to take up a cross — to endure hardship or suffering. In such situations, crosses are the obstacles that stand in the way of attaining the goal.

## **Two alternatives**

Faced with this kind of situation, the Christian has two alternatives: (1) Leave the "straight and narrow" to try to find a way around the obstacle. (2) Take up the cross that blocks the way to the goal and carry it out of the way. This involves conflict, suffering, and sometimes death.

In Matthew 16:22 Peter suggested the first alternative: "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You."

But Jesus rebuked Peter because he didn't understand crosses. When Jesus said to Peter, "Get behind Me,

SATAN," it is possible that He saw in Peter's words a continuation of Satan's ongoing efforts to detour Him around the cross, which stood as an obstacle on the way to the kingdom.

Satan continually appealed to Jesus' humanness, which didn't like crosses and suffering. That the human part of Jesus shrank from the cross is witnessed by His struggle in Gethsemane to find another solution: "... if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me..." (Matt. 26:39).

Jesus did not want to suffer this cruel death. Yet when there was no alternative, He knew He must "deny Himself and take up His cross." He realized that His entire life's purpose hinged on that one decision — whether He would shoulder the cross or whether He would try to find a way around it.

Other efforts by Satan to appeal to Jesus' humanness were Christ's temptations in the wilderness (Matt. 4) and the temptation at the Transfiguration to avoid the problems in

the valley by staying on the mount (Matt. 17). Even during Jesus' last moments on the cross, Satan encouraged Jesus to take the easy road when one of the thieves cried, "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us" (Luke 23:39, KJV).

Like many Christians, Peter had not yet comprehended the necessity of cross-bearing. "... you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's," Jesus told him (Matt. 16:23).

## **An inescapable warning**

God does not call us to deliberately seek some cross of pain, suffering, or deprivation to identify with the cross of Christ. But if suffering becomes necessary in order for us to fulfill our pursuit of God's Kingdom, then the warning of Jesus becomes inescapable: "... whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it. For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul?" (Matt. 16:25-26).

## **Prayer for Courage**

*Let me not pray to be sheltered from dangers;*

*But to be fearless in facing them.*

*Let me not beg for the stilling of my pain*

*But for the heart to conquer it.*

*Let me not look for allies in life's battlefield*

*But to my own strength.*

*Let me not crave in anxious fear to be saved*

*But hope for the patience to win my freedom.*

*Grant me that I might not be a coward*

*Feeling Your mercy in my success alone*

*But let me find the grasp of Your Hand in my failure.*

Rabindranath Tagore [†]



*Jesus "realized that His entire life's purpose hinged on that one decision — whether He would shoulder the cross or whether He would try to find a way around it."*



# Jesus Is Lord

"... that in everything He might have the supremacy" (Col. 1:18).

By Moderator Kenneth L. Sullivan

**T**HESE are exciting times to be Brethren! The fresh wind of God's Spirit is blowing throughout the denomination, inspiring a renewal of vision and of hope for the future of our church. Once again Brethren sense God's call to minister the unique aspect of the gospel that they have received as an inheritance.

I came into The Brethren Church as an outsider. Having come from a Presbyterian background, the Brethren and their beliefs were a new experience for me. Entering the church in the early 60's, I spent a lot of time observing and learning as much as I could about the denomination. Even as I grew to love our church, I could not help but notice the tension that accompanied many business sessions of General Conference and the gathering of power groups to defeat or pass a given agenda item, often at the expense of the whole.

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***"We have regained the belief that Jesus is Lord of the future and that we can trust Him to take us there."***

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As a new Christian, I often found myself swept along with this mentality and caught up in the discord it created among God's people. I believe that each person really wanted what was best for the church, or at

least thought that he or she did. But some people were hurt by such actions, as new ideas were sometimes ruthlessly struck down and personalities were maligned. Motives were often misunderstood, and with suspicion came a spirit of fear, defeat, and entrenchment. Some still wear the scars of these battles and nurse wounds in silence or struggle to overcome a bitterness mixed with a deep love for the Brethren.

## Something has changed

But something has changed! I'm not sure when it began, or how. Many people and events have contributed to the new spirit within our church; people who never lost hope that God still works among us and has great things for the Brethren in the future.

We are seeing a new humility, tolerance, and a willingness to give way in preference to one another. Unity flows across the conference floor, and the old negative attitude has given way to a spirit of confidence and vigor. The Brethren are demonstrating a willingness to be accountable to each other and to their Lord as they seek to serve His church. Self-sacrifice is replacing seeking after personal gain.

We have rediscovered the strengths and gifts that God has supplied, and we have determined to build upon this foundation. We

boldly seized the future by the actions of the 1988 General Conference. We made a commitment to hire a Director of Brethren Church Ministries and to change the existing structure of the denomination in order to facilitate ministry and growth. A momentum is building in anticipation of what God will do through us.

As many of you should know, Rev. Ronald W. Waters has accepted the Lord's call to the position of Director of Brethren Church Ministries. As one who served on the search committee, I am excited. We truly believe Ron to be God's selection for this ministry.

I can only marvel at how God changed hearts, controlled events, and put each piece in its proper place to make Ron's selection possible. I want to extend thanks to the search committee for their unwavering commitment to seeking God's will; to the General Conference Executive Council members for their support and prayers as we worked through the process of discovering the heart of God in this matter; and to the Brethren for their courage of commitment and trust in their delegates' decisions at the last General Conference and their financial support for this new work.

It needs to be understood that Ron's selection did not come without a mixture of concerns and emotions. We suffer a shortage of pastors. Therefore, a decision to remove a qualified minister from the local church is made only after considering the welfare of the denomination as a whole. We extend our gratitude to the Mount Olive Brethren Church. Just as it is difficult for a pastor to leave a church, it is also difficult for members of a church to surrender a pastor they love and to free him for a higher service. We owe Mt. Olive our prayers for the filling of the space left by Ron, and we trust that God will adequately provide for that church.

## We've turned a corner

We have turned a corner in Brethren ministry. Fear has given way to vision; suspicion has surrendered to trust and hope. We have regained the belief that Jesus is Lord of the future and that we can trust Him to take us there. [†]



# WORLD RELIEF REACHES OUT . . .

. . . Impressions of a Pastor/Board Member

## A Smile, a Hug, and a Hand

By David E. Benshoff

**W**HILE living in Kansas, I had the opportunity to serve as a volunteer for the Special Olympics in Wichita. Here were children and adults who were not directly responsible for their circumstances but who were forced to survive within the limits of their individual handicaps.

### The basics of life

As my involvement in the Olympics increased, I discovered that the only requirements placed on me were the unselfish giving of a smile, a hug of encouragement, and a hand for them to hold on to. How humbled I was by the experience of seeing someone asking for only the basics of life to assist him or her with the task at hand!

As a new pastor and member of the World Relief Board, I have been enlightened with a greater awareness of the needs of others. It is very true that we must care for the needs of those in our own church and surrounding community. But we must not stop there. We all need to be involved in providing the basics of survival for people around the world.

Without hardly batting an eye, we see to it that we or our children go to the doctor at the sign of the slightest illness. Yet it is estimated that in India alone about 75 percent of the children never receive the immunizations they need to survive childhood. Here, again, are people dealing with circumstances for which they are not directly re-

sponsible. World Relief provides them assistance; we must help.

Besides providing medical assistance, World Relief also helps farmers of Third World countries learn new ways to cultivate the little land they have, not only in order to provide food and shelter for their families, but also so that they can achieve a basic sense of self-worth.

In addition to teaching fathers and husbands, World Relief workers also train wives and mothers in child care, hygiene, and sewing — just to name a few.

We can be proud as Brethren of our overall involvement in World Relief. The April 1988 issue of the *EVANGELIST* reported that we Brethren were second in per-member giving to World Relief at \$3.63, only one cent behind the leader. It also stated that 89 churches gave to World Relief, with 51 churches giving more in 1987 than they gave in 1986. Praise the Lord! But it also showed that 35 churches had not yet grasped the severity of conditions around the world.

### Soup-can promotion

We here at Brethren Bible Church gave \$287 last year through the soup-can promotion, collecting our monies each quarter. This may not sound like much, but when you consider that a family in the Philippines can be fed for a month on \$18.40 from World Relief, this means we were able to feed a family for 15 months. It was really a fun experience watching children and adults alike empty their soup cans into a large crock, symbolizing what these families

may use in their own homes.

While many of our churches are involved in local relief programs, we dare not lose our sensitivity to the needs of those we cannot touch directly. Our church supports a crisis pregnancy support group in Canton and has received many blessings from this. But we can't stop there. We can only test our faith that God's work is being accomplished when we can let go of our resources and share the abundance God has entrusted to us with those we cannot see.

### An extension of ourselves

As I look at the World Relief program in The Brethren Church, I see an extension of ourselves. But the only way you can reap the harvest of knowing that you have helped someone is when your church is a part of that help. The whole point is to start giving to World Relief no matter how small you think your offerings are. Do you realize that if your church has 30 families and that if each family gave \$1.00 a week to World Relief, at the end of the year your church would have given \$1,560 to help feed, clothe, educate, and treat medically those who are not responsible for the circumstances that are before them.

You know, as I see it, these people that World Relief helps aren't looking for the best that money can buy. They only need a smile, a hug of encouragement, and a hand to hold on to until they are able to care for themselves. Let's be creative this year in our churches and help others help themselves through World Relief. [†]

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*Pastor Benshoff serves the Brethren Bible Church of Louisville, Ohio, and is a member of the World Relief Board.*

## . . . Domestic Disaster/Child Care

**Lydia Walker, CDCC Director, writes:**

"A lot goes on behind the scenes and from day to day which makes this a cooperative program. The word simply means 'working together.' 'Cooperative' is an attitude and a behavior which we expect and find in our caregivers. Teamwork on the disaster site is a must. It not only makes the work more fun, but is essential if we are to provide a safe, secure and calm environment for children who have just experienced trauma, chaos and confusion.

Four important elements of a good team are Trust, Empathy, Affirmation and Membership (T.E.A.M.). A group of people who trust each other, who listen to and care for each other, who affirm each other and share feelings, and who have a strong sense of belonging to the group, make a good team. An effective team is one which understands and follows the ten principles of teamwork, which are:

(1) **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.** Team members understand and agree on the goals and objectives for their work. This means good planning before jumping into the task.

(2) **INDIVIDUAL GIFTS AND RESOURCES.** The special talents of each person are fully recognized and utilized. This means taking time to get to know one another and to affirm strengths.

(3) **TRUST AND CONFLICT.** A high degree of trust exists among members, and conflicts are dealt with openly and with love. This includes the risk of sharing discom-

forts and talking about what is not working, rather than pretending the conflict does not exist.

(4) **LEADERSHIP.** Leadership roles are shared by members and there is cooperation with and respect for designated authority.

(5) **CONTROL AND PROCEDURES.** There are effective procedures to guide team functioning. Team members support these procedures and regulate themselves.

(6) **INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION.** Communications between members of the team are honest and participative. This means caregivers contribute their thoughts and let others know how they are feeling.

(7) **PROBLEM-SOLVING AND DECISION MAKING.** The team establishes and agrees on approaches to solving problems and making decisions together.

(8) **FLEXIBILITY AND CREATIVITY.** The team can experi-

ment with different ways of doing things and can adapt to changing circumstances.

(9) **EVALUATION.** The team frequently stops and evaluates how things are going and makes changes as needed. This means they are willing to learn from their experience.

(10) **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE.** The caregiver team acknowledges the presence and gifts of the Spirit and takes time for prayer, meditation, and celebration. For it is only through the Spirit that we are able to produce the fruits of the Spirit.

Don't wait for a disaster to apply these attitudes and principles. If practiced, they can help you improve groups working together in every situation; including family, church, work, and community life."

— Reprinted from *Caregiver Connection*, Cooperative Disaster Child Care Program, Winter, 1988, Newsletter (Church of the Brethren).

### Refugee/Disaster Update

Vol. VI, No. 3, Winter 1988-89.

#### Projects Update

The national office (Church of the Brethren) has completed its drought relief efforts for the year, during which 17 truckloads of hay were sent to farmers in Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. The hay was donated by farmers in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. The Disaster Response Program also provided funds to Heifer Project International for the transportation of three loads of hay to Kentucky farmers.

**A drought-stricken Minnesota**

**farm family** sent this message of gratitude: "Words cannot express the feeling in our hearts when the load of hay you sent us pulled into our yard. We would like to say a big *thank you* to all of you who helped to get us this beautiful hay. . . . It has really been a tough summer for us to see our crops wither day after day . . . That is why this load of hay means so much to us. . . . May God bless you all as He has blessed us through you wonderful people."

**Note:** Our Brethren World Relief Board contributed \$1,250 this past year to the Church of the Brethren DOMESTIC DISASTER/CHILD CARE Programs.



# WORLD RELIEF REACHES OUT . . .

**World Relief** is the emergency aid, development assistance and refugee service arm of the National Association of Evangelicals, USA . . . working through 40,000 North American churches from 46 denominations, their missionaries and counterpart churches worldwide to provide help and hope in Jesus' Name.

.....Rural Filipinos once relied on sugarcane crops to earn a living. But after worldwide demand for sugar dropped, churches began showing farmers how to grow rice to feed their families.

.....More than 70 million children will die during the next decade without immunizations.

.....African women often walk eight hours a day — in

search of water for drinking and firewood for cooking.

.....As churches deliver help from World Relief, they demonstrate God's love — a new life thousands discover and embrace each year.

.....Diseases often claim the lives of malnourished people before they starve to death. Churches deliver food and medicine supplied by World Relief to help stop the dying.

.....Putting seeds into the ground is not enough to produce harvests in hostile climates. Special techniques, training, and irrigation are necessary for survival.

## SEE THE WORLD. . . and how Christians overseas are saving lives.

See for yourself in these new World Relief films.



World Relief Photo by Cecil Cole

### "STANDING TOGETHER"

—available in 16 mm and VHS. See how African churches in suffering areas help their neighbors dig wells, plant gardens and experience God's love in spite of their own desperate situation.

### "MOZAMBIQUE: A WORLD RELIEF STATUS REPORT"

—available in VHS. See firsthand how the church is responding to what is being called the greatest area of brutality and need on earth.

### "BANGLADESH CRISIS UPDATE"

—available in VHS. Features the latest scenes from the August and September 1988 flooding and the church response to help the flood victims.

Reserve a VHS or 16mm for your church or special group by calling 1-800-535-LIFE.

## New Methods Save Lives

**MALI** World Relief agricultural staff report that using better irrigation systems and fertilizers have totally turned around Danana farmers' vegetable production. Last year, the farmers who were starving only two years ago, harvested enough pimento, cabbage, okra, onions, lettuce, potatoes and tomatoes to feed their families and had surplus to sell at the local market. With their market earnings, parents can provide clothing and medical care to their families.

**BURKINA FASO** Despite antagonism from other religious groups, Christians in the village of Rasule have always

shared what little they have. And today they are seeing the results. Many villagers have become Christians because the local church shared the newly-dug World Relief well with the whole village. For the first time in years, families now have clean water for drinking, cooking and planting.

Every day, mothers spend hours working in the fields and then walk miles to find water and look for food. Local Christians and World Relief staff are training them to earn a living extracting oil from groundnuts, sesame seeds and shea nuts to make sesame oil, nut butter and soap. By selling these products, the 150 mothers earn money to buy good food for their children. And with the by-products of the oil processing, the women also make high protein groundnut cakes.

# ... UPDATES FROM "Partnership" & "Touching" of W.R.C.

## A New Chance at Life

**HAITI** UNICEF reports that 44 percent of all Haitian children under five years suffer from malnutrition. Those who die often are victims of



World Relief Photo by Jim Whitmer

diarrheal diseases. World Relief is working in countries like Haiti, teaching parents how to prevent needless dying among their children by showing parents how to weigh, feed and play with their infants.

With \$7.39, World Relief can save a Haitian child's life, protecting him against tetanus, polio, measles, tuberculosis, malaria and diphtheria.

**BANGLADESH** At age six, Sachin knows suffering. He's been banned from public schools. Prohibited from drinking at public water fountains. All because he's an "untouchable" — a member of the lowest class in Bangladesh's historic (yet outlawed) caste society. Worse yet, Sachin's father died young, leaving behind five children and an uneducated widow who had no skills to support her family. But

*Orphans with nowhere else to turn (photo) find shelter and love with World Relief's Paul Munshi.*



World Relief Photo by Bea Vanderzalm

## From the World Relief Board President:

These past five years have been exciting times to be involved in the work of World Relief. Many types of disasters have occurred during this time both here in America and around the world. Both short and long term solutions are needed.

The Brethren Church has responded well. In the past five years \$325,264 has been given through our World Relief Board.

Sachin also knows about hope. Paul Munshi, World Relief's director in Bangladesh, and other Christians invited him to stay at an orphanage for untouchable children. There, Sachin is educated, clothed and fed. Munshi also loaned Sachin's mother money. With it, she purchased materials so she now can weave bamboo mats to help support her family. "Without the orphanage," Munshi concluded, "boys like Sachin would become thieves and vandals. Here they learn of their value in God's eyes and become assets to the world."

With a loan from World Relief, this Bangladesh man (at r.) is supporting his family by weaving baskets made of a strong fiber called jute.



World Relief Photo by Barry Mackey

As the people of Bangladesh's southern coast struggled to rebuild their homes and lives

after the latest flood, fifteen-foot tidal waves struck leaving dead and injured in its wake. Since the disaster, local churches have distributed 504,755 pounds of rice, potatoes, salt, peas and flour to 166,608 people in 162 villages.

World Relief will help 140,000 people in other flood-stricken areas replant crops, rebuild boats and go to work by weaving, driving rickshaws and making bricks.

**SOVIET UNION** More than 55,000 people were killed in Armenia when an earthquake measuring 6.9 on the Richter scale buried people alive in schools, homes and factories. World Relief churches are distributing food, blankets, clothing and building materials through Armenian churches in the area to the neediest families.

1984 - \$ 69,528	(\$ 63,500 to W.R.C.)
1985 - 69,970	( 65,000 to W.R.C.)
1986 - 58,560	( 51,000 to W.R.C.)
1987 - 60,665	( 53,000 to W.R.C.)
1988 - <u>66,541</u>	( 65,700 to W.R.C.)
<u>\$325,264</u>	(\$298,200 to W.R.C.)

We have helped many people in the world to live and to have a future. For them, I offer to you my personal thanks!

— Rev. Marlin L. McCann



Send offerings to:  
**Brethren World Relief**  
**Rev. Ronald L. Waters**  
**P.O. Box 246**  
**Burlington, IN 46915**

# BRETHREN MEN OF MISSION: PROPOSED CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

**Explanation:** The following proposed new constitution and bylaws for Brethren Men of Mission (currently the National Laymen Organization) are being printed here so that men of The Brethren Church may have an opportunity to study them prior to the 1989 General Conference (August 7-11), at which time they will be acted upon.

## Brethren Men of Mission

### Proposed Constitution

October 17, 1988

#### PURPOSE

We the men of the Brethren Church do ordain and establish this organization with the following constitution to provide a means of promotion of fellowship, spiritual growth and Christian service among the men and boys of the Brethren Church in support of the local congregation's total "partnership in ministry."

#### ARTICLE I - NAME

This organization shall be known as the Brethren Men of Mission and shall operate under the corporate structure of the Brethren Church in Ashland, Ohio.

#### ARTICLE II - AUTHORITY

Section 1. This organization shall have the power to provide for its own perpetuation; to receive and accept gifts; to collect dues; to provide for the purchase, holding, and conveyance of property, either real or personal; to provide for and promote denominational unity and efficiency in all efforts looking to the evangelization of the world; to direct and control all cooperating bodies of its own creation; to effect its own organization; to determine the time and place of its meetings in cooperation with the General Conference Executive Committee; to adopt a constitution and bylaws for its government; and to represent the collective voice of the men of The Brethren Church.

Section 2. In the event of the disbandment of the organization, or its disorganization, or its ceasing to use its property in the interest of the Brethren Church as set forth in Article II above, such property shall revert to the General Conference Executive Committee, or such property holding board of the Brethren Church whose headquarters is in Ashland, Ohio.

#### ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. The regular membership of this organization shall be composed of all men and boys who are members in good standing of a Brethren church affiliated with the General Conference of The Brethren Church whose headquarters is in Ashland, Ohio.

Section 2. Associate membership shall be composed of any men and boys who attend but are not members of the Brethren Church. They shall have all the rights and privileges of regular membership except that of holding office.

Section 3. Annual Credential Fees and National Dues for members of local organizations shall be determined from time to time by this organization at its Annual Meeting and shall be binding upon all the membership.

#### ARTICLE IV - MEETINGS

Section 1. The Annual Meeting of this organization shall be held the same time and place as the General Conference of The Brethren Church, unless another time and place be agreed upon at a previous Annual Meeting.

Section 2. Special Meetings may be called by the President, the Executive Committee, or by any ten (10) members who make a proper written request of the Executive Committee through the Secretary. Notice of such meetings shall be made at least thirty (30) days in advance by notifying each local organization on record with the Secretary and Treasurer by letter, or a published notice in the Brethren Evangelist or the Laymen Newsletter.

#### ARTICLE V - OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

Section 1. The officers of this organization shall consist of the President, President-Elect, Second Vice President, Past President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer. These officers along with the District Representatives shall compose the Executive Committee.

Section 2. Any committees shall be elected or appointed according to the Bylaws for the various functions as deemed necessary by the membership and the Executive Committee.

#### ARTICLE VI - AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended at any regularly scheduled Annual Meeting or at a special business meeting of the membership by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of any members present and voting provided that a notice of any proposed changes be made to each local organization at least thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Meeting. Proper notice may be achieved by publishing a copy of the proposed changes in the Brethren Evangelist, in the Laymen's Newsletter or a copy sent to each local organization on record with the Secretary and Treasurer.

## Brethren Men of Mission

### Proposed Bylaws

October 17, 1988

#### ARTICLE I - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Each Brethren Church congregation or district is entitled to send delegates of their membership to the Annual Meeting. Men and boys attending the annual General Conference of The Brethren Church including members of congregations where there is no organized men and boys fellowship group, may become regular members of this organization and may qualify as delegates in its Annual Meeting by presenting their Delegate Credential along with applicable Two Dollars (\$2.00) Delegate Credential Fee.

Section 2. All national, district and local officers shall be delegates to the annual meeting by virtue of their office with the presentation of their Delegate Credential along with the applicable Two Dollars (\$2.00) Delegate Credential Fee.

Section 3. Men and boys who are not members of the Brethren Church may become Associate Members of this organization by presenting their Delegate Credential along with the applicable Two Dollar (\$2.00) Delegate Credential Fee.

Section 4. In order for National Membership of a local organization, Annual Dues of Two Dollars (\$2.00) per member shall be submitted by that local organization along with the list of members and officers to the Treasurer by April 1 of each year.

#### ARTICLE II - OFFICER AND DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE ELECTION

Section 1. Nomination for officers and district representatives will be submitted by the Nominating Committee at the Annual Meeting. Nominations will be obtained and confirmed for each office prior to the Annual Meeting with a ballot to be presented and the election will be conducted by the Chairman of the Nominating Committee. Each district will have the privilege and responsibility of submitting nominees for their respective representative to the Nominating Committee.

Section 2. Tenure of office for the officers and District Representatives shall be as follows: President shall be elected for a three year term in which time he will serve one year each as President-Elect, President, and Past President. Second Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected for a two year term in even years and the Assistant Secretary and Assistant Treasurer shall be elected for two year terms in odd years. The District Representatives shall be elected for three year terms so arranged so that they expire in a staggered manner. No officer or representative shall succeed himself more than once.

Section 3. All vacancies in offices that occur between Annual Meetings shall be filled by appointment of the Executive Committee and confirmed at the following Annual Meeting if the vacancy filled by appointment is for more than one year.

#### ARTICLE III - OFFICERS DUTIES

Section 1. The President shall preside at all meetings, shall have the authority to appoint any task force or committee deemed necessary to plan and implement the program of the organization including the annual meeting.

Section 2. The President-Elect shall preside over any meetings in the absence of the President, and will be in charge of the planning and implementing of the Annual Meeting. He shall also serve as Chairman of the Nominating Committee.

Section 3. The Second Vice President shall provide leadership to the program for the young boys in the organization as directed by the Executive Committee.

Section 4. The Past President shall provide leadership for the Membership Committee or other committees as assigned by the President and shall work closely with the District Representatives in gathering and disseminating information.

Section 5. The Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all Executive Committee and Annual Meeting sessions, and shall handle correspondence as assigned by the President.

Section 6. The Assistant Secretary shall  
(continued on next page)



# Readers' Forum

A column in which readers can share their thoughts and views with the Brethren.

## Experiencing the "Community of Love"

The March issue of the EVANGELIST carried the transcript of Fred Finks' General Conference message about the community of love the Brethren build among themselves. I read the article during my long recovery from an automobile accident, [which occurred] in late February.

At the same time my copy of the EVANGELIST arrived, I was being flooded with "get well" cards, letters, and phone calls from throughout the denomination. Some friends even wrote twice!

Hospital workers, neighbors and friends — some non-Christians among them — were impressed with the volume of mail I received. It was great to be able to explain to them the common link I shared with *brothers and sisters in Christ*.

May I attest to the practice among the Brethren of the essence of the message Dr. Finks delivered at General Conference? And may I reinforce his message of the importance of demonstrating that love to a world that is searching for love and acceptance of the kind shown me by the Brethren?

Also, I offer my thanks for the prayers said on my behalf and on behalf of my family during this difficult time.

Yours in His name,  
Charles G. Beekley

P.S. On March 20, I returned to the office on a part-time schedule, and anticipate continuing progress in the healing process over the next three or

four weeks. I have some permanent damage to the nervous system in the upper portion of my face, and some

scars that will be a long time — if ever — going away. Other than that, however, I anticipate a complete recovery.

### Men of Mission Proposed Bylaws

(continued from previous page)

assist the Secretary in keeping accurate minutes, maintaining credentials, publishing an annual directory of membership, and other duties as assigned by the Secretary and President.

Section 7. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate record of all funds received and disbursed by and for the organization, prepare a budget, and other duties as assigned by the President. All funds will be deposited in a bank account with at least two persons authorized to make transactions. One shall be the Treasurer and the other shall be designated by the Executive Committee.

Section 8. The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer in maintaining accurate financial records, will receive and keep records of all offerings at the Annual Meeting, and perform other duties as assigned by the Treasurer and President.

Section 9. The District Representatives shall be elected in such a way that each organized District of the Brethren Church is represented. The District Representatives shall be responsible for being a liaison between the national and local organizations within the various districts throughout the brotherhood.

### ARTICLE IV — COMMITTEE DUTIES

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall meet just after the closing of the Annual Meeting to set a schedule of meeting dates in order to plan and initiate the program for the ensuing year.

Section 2. The Nominating Committee shall consist of three members. Two will be

nominated from the floor and elected at the first session of the Annual Meeting and the President-Elect shall act as chairman. This committee shall work during the coming year and have a ballot of at least two candidates for each office ready to submit at the last session of the following year's Annual Meeting. The Chairman of the committee will be elected from within the committee and shall conduct the election by ballot with the committee acting as tellers unless a committee member is a candidate for election in which case the President shall appoint a replacement.

Section 3. Other committees or task forces shall be appointed by the President as they are necessary to carry on the business of the organization. These committees may include but shall not be limited to Goals, Project, Auditing, Program, Communication, Publicity, Budget, and Membership.

### ARTICLE V — SPECIAL PROVISIONS

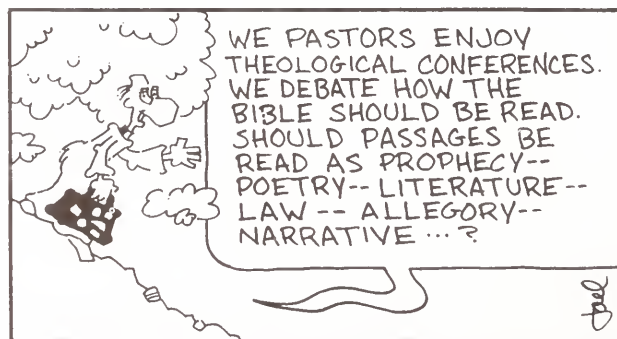
Robert's Rules of Order or any standard rules of order as may be adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those in attendance, shall be followed at the Annual Meeting of this organization.

### ARTICLE VI — ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS

Section 1. A set of bylaws may be developed to outline the operational structure and functioning of the organization. These bylaws shall be published as updated and amended from time to time and become a part of this document.

Section 2. These bylaws may be changed or amended by a majority vote of those in attendance at any session of the Annual Meeting, or at a specially called meeting for which thirty (30) days notice has been given.

### Pontius' Puddle





*The new fellowship hall of the Pleasant View Brethren Church.*

### Pleasant View Church Dedicates Fellowship Hall on Palm Sunday

**Vandergrift, Pa.** — Members of the Pleasant View Brethren Church dedicated their new fellowship hall during the Palm Sunday morning worship service, which was held in the new building.

The 60- by 60-foot building includes a large meeting area, a kitchen, a baptistry area, and complete restrooms, including facilities for the handicapped. The building will be used for Sunday evening services, Bible

studies, Communion services (the first Love Feast in the new building was held March 23), baptisms, church fellowship activities, and Narcotic Anonymous meetings. The facility will also be available for public rentals.

Contractors did excavating work, put up the shell, and installed the heating and plumbing, with the rest of the work being done by members and friends of the congregation. Approximately 35 men and women helped

with this work. Four of these volunteers, who worked on interior construction almost daily after the shell was completed and therefore merit special mention, are Charles McDevitt, LeRoy Bills, Joey Carney, and Ron Harnish. Total cost of the building was approximately \$100,000, plus the many work hours of the volunteers.

The new fellowship hall is the first phase of a two-phase building project. The second phase calls for construction of a 100- by 60-foot auditorium/gymnasium and the division of the meeting area in the present building into a nursery and various other rooms.

During the Palm Sunday service, Larry Harnish, chairperson of the building committee, led in the dedication of the new building. He gave a brief history of the building process, which began last fall, and expressed thanks to the contractors and to the volunteers, who were so helpful in completing the building.

### Museum Director to Lecture On 19th-Century Brethren

**Walnut Creek, Ohio** — A lecture on the common heritage of the Brethren in the 19th century will be held May 20 at 7:00 p.m. at the East Chippewa Church of the Brethren.

Stanley A. Kaufmann, director-curator of the German Culture Museum in Walnut Creek, will present the illustrated lecture, entitled "German Baptist Brethren in Ohio." He will discuss the importance of the Love Feast in Brethren tradition and will consider how this observance and other Brethren beliefs and practices were reflected in house and meeting-house architecture, furniture, textiles, metalwork, folk art, housewares, and farm tools of the 19th century.

Interested persons from all five Brethren groups are invited to attend the lecture. The East Chippewa Church is located east of Smithville, Ohio, at 7487 Chippewa Rd., Orrville, OH 44667.

For more information, contact Gayle Hostetler of the East Chippewa congregation (phone 216-828-2296) or Stanley A. Kaufman at the German Culture Museum (216-893-2842).

Let your religion be less of a theory and more of a love affair.

— G.K. Chesterton

### Mirandas Bring Messages at Pleasant Hill Missions Conf.

**Pleasant Hill, Ohio** — Dr. Juan Carlos and María Miranda were the guest speakers at the Annual Missions Conference held March 4-5 at the Pleasant Hill First Brethren Church.

The opening event of the conference was a Saturday morning Father and Son Breakfast, at which Dr. Miranda, supervisor of Hispanic Ministries for the Brethren Church, was the speaker.

This was followed at noon with a Mother-Daughter Luncheon, with Mrs. Miranda, spokeswoman on a radio program heard by thousands of Hispanic women, presenting a message.

The conference continued on Sunday morning, with missions the focus of

both Sunday school and morning worship. During the Sunday school hour, the high school class and all adult classes met in the sanctuary with the Mirandas for a question and answer time about Brethren mission work in Mexico.

During the worship service, special music was presented by a group from Taylor University called "Commissioned to Go." Each member of this group is a son or daughter of missionary parents. This was followed by a message by Dr. Miranda, after which members of the congregation turned in their Faith Promises for Missions. A total of \$19,490.60 in Faith Promises was received, well over the goal of \$18,000 set by the church's board of missions.

A noon fellowship meal concluded the Missionary Conference.

— reported by Betty J. Shellenberger



# Ohio District Brethren Meet for Inspiration, Business, Fellowship

North Georgetown, Ohio — Eighty-three Brethren of the Ohio District gathered at the First Brethren Church of North Georgetown on Saturday, March 11, to hear a message by General Conference Moderator Kenneth Sullivan, to care for district business, and to fellowship with one another.

Using the General Conference theme, "Jesus Is Lord!" as the focal point of his message, Moderator Sullivan looked at some consequences of Jesus' supremacy in our lives. He noted, for example that Jesus has called us to a ministry of reconciliation — bringing others to God. Since Jesus is Lord, we are obligated to carry out that ministry and to "pay the price" of performing it.

Moderator Sullivan also challenged Brethren to pray, saying, "If Jesus is Lord, let's go to Him in prayer, recognizing who He is." He urged Brethren to pray for God's direction in local churches and upon the denomination as a whole, and that God would raise up people to serve as pastors and leaders in the church.

Ohio District Moderator Terry Lodico led the business session during which officers and board and commit-

tee members were elected, reports received, and other items of business cared for. Rev. Robert Dillard, pastor of the Brethren Church at New Lebanon, becomes the new moderator. Elected to serve with him were Rev. David Olgee, moderator-elect; Marcia Stoffer, secretary; Susie Black, assistant secretary; Tom Stoffer, treasurer; Stanley Gentle, assistant treasurer; and Rev. Stephen Cole, statistician.

District mission board chairman Robert Westfall reported that the new mission church at Springboro, Ohio — the Northview Brethren Life Church — got off to a very good start on March 5 with 101 in attendance (in spite of cold, wind, and rain) for the first Sunday morning service of the new work. Approximately 30 were present for the evening worship service that same day. He further reported that members from five southern Ohio Brethren churches made 17,341 phone calls and talked to 10,156 people in the Springboro area in January and February prior to this first service. From these phone calls a list of 2,003 prospects was garnered (people not attending a church who indicated that they were interested in receiving information about the new church).

The statistician's report indicated

that the district suffered a net loss of 100 members during 1988, with average worship attendance also showing a significant decrease (162 less than the 1987 average).

The next Ohio District Conference meeting was set for March 9-10, 1990, to be held at the Hillcrest Brethren Church in Dayton, Ohio.

— Dick Winfield

## Brethren Heritage Conference To be Held June 4-10 in Ohio

Clayton, Ohio — A Brethren Heritage Conference will be held June 4-10, 1989, at Woodland Altars, Peebles, Ohio.

Dr. Donald F. Durnbaugh, the Church of the Brethren's foremost Brethren historian and editor of *The Brethren Encyclopedia*, will lead six heritage classes during the conference, and Rev. Karen Calderon, Field Associate of the Training in Ministry program of Bethany Seminary, will lead six Bible study classes on New Testament passages of special significance to Brethren.

The conference, which is sponsored by the Church of the Brethren, is open to members of all five Brethren groups. For more information, contact Helen Fairbanks, Southern Ohio District Church of the Brethren, 6987 Union Rd., Clayton, OH 45315 (phone 513-836-9654).

## Milledgeville Church Hosts Community Concert of Praise

Milledgeville, Ill. — A standing-room-only crowd of 365 attended the Community Choir Concert of Praise held Palm Sunday evening, hosted by the Milledgeville Brethren Church.

The concert included one selection each by the Church of the Brethren and the Methodist Church choirs, several instrumental numbers, and four selections by the 70-voice community choir. This choir was made up of singers from the Brethren, Methodist, Lutheran, Baptist, and Church of the Brethren churches of Milledgeville. Denise Lent, vocal music teacher at the Milledgeville school, was the choir's guest conductor, and Judy Bushman, Methodist Church organist, was the accompanist.

Rev. Kenneth Sullivan, pastor of the Milledgeville Brethren Church, gave the welcome to those who attended the concert, and Bill Shipman, youth pastor of the church, pronounced the benediction.

— reported by Lorraine J. Haugh

## ASSOCIATION OF EVANGELICALS



The Ashland Theological Seminary Chapel Choir, under the direction of ATS associate professor of music Dr. Ronald Sprunger, sang several numbers during the Wednesday evening session of the National Association of Evangelicals Convention, held March 7-9 in Columbus, Ohio. In keeping with the convention theme, "Revive Your Church, O Lord!" the speaker for the service — Dr. David A. Seamands, professor of pastoral ministry at Asbury Theological Seminary — spoke of the church's need for purity in message, purity in methodology, and purity in moral life. More information about the NAE convention will be included in next month's issue of the EVANGELIST.

Photo by Don Huntsberger; courtesy NAE.

# Old-Fashioned Sunday Launches Elkhart Centennial Celebration

Elkhart, Ind. — "Let Love of the Brethren Continue" is the theme of a ten-month celebration by the Elkhart First Brethren Church of its centennial anniversary. The Elkhart Brethren launched their celebration on January 15 with old-fashioned Sunday school and worship services.

Following the practice of Brethren 100 years ago, women sat on one side of the meetinghouse during the worship service, men on the other, and the elders — Rev. Dan Gray, pastor of the congregation, and Rev. Mark Baker, minister of music — sat at the front on a bench behind a table. Attire for the service was reminiscent of that worn a hundred years ago, and kerosene lamps provided illumination.

The order of worship, likewise, followed that of our Brethren forerunners. A time of silence was observed. Hymns were sung unaccompanied and were "lined" for the worshipers by Elder Baker. Passages from both the Old Testament and New Testament were read. And Elders Gray and Baker alternately preached from several passages of scripture.

An old-fashioned carry-in dinner fol-



Lynn Wenner and Mark Baker, dressed in attire of an earlier day, climb into a horsedrawn wagon that was used to give rides to Elkhart Brethren on old-fashioned Sunday afternoon. (A sleigh was to have been used, but the weather didn't cooperate).

The Elkhart Truth photo.



Elder Dan Gray, pastor of the Elkhart Church, expounds the Word, while Elder Mark Baker looks on.

lowed the morning services, and the meal was followed in turn by an afternoon program. Special music for this program included instrumental selections by a group from the Tiosa Brethren Church and vocal solos by Brian Swartzell of Mishawaka, Ind., and by Rev. Paul Tinkel, pastor of the Milford, Ind., First Brethren Church.

The message for the afternoon gathering was presented by Tony Pica, pastor of the Mishawaka Brethren Church, who gave a challenge for the future. Special guests in attendance were Rev. Lester V. King, pastor of the congregation from 1946 to 1952, and Rev. and Mrs. Robert Bischof.

According to Joan Stemm, who compiled and published a 180-page history of the congregation, the Elkhart Brethren Church got its start on a rainy Wednesday evening, April 3, 1889, when a valiant band of 33 Christian men and women met in East Elkhart to form a branch of God's family. Many of the believers were former members of a Brethren congregation in Middleport, Ind. They had moved to Elkhart to seek employment with the railroad or with various mills.

The fledgling congregation met in members' homes until February 1891, when a little white building was purchased for \$450 from the United Brethren. Despite a 1907 remodeling, this first meetinghouse soon couldn't hold the congregation, so the structure was sold in May 1927, and the follow-

ing month the Brethren broke ground for a new building at Middlebury Street and Goshen Avenue.

The first (basement) unit of this building was completed by the fall of that year. The congregation moved into this unit and continued to build upward, and in 1941 the completed edifice, which housed a sanctuary that would seat 500, was dedicated. This structure was remodeled in 1971.

Following an October 1979 split, the congregation no longer needed such a large sanctuary, so the building was sold to another congregation and construction was begun on a smaller, more modern facility. This new building, located at 24197 County Road East, was dedicated June 9, 1985.

In addition to the structures it built, the Elkhart congregation also gave birth to a daughter congregation. The Winding Waters Brethren Church, located on Elkhart's northwest side, was started by the Elkhart Church in 1964 and is now larger than the mother congregation.

The Elkhart Church will continue its centennial celebration with several other major events throughout the year: an April 2 church birthday party, with Rev. Leroy Solomon, Pastor of the Winding Waters Brethren Church, presenting a message during the afternoon program; a June 11 hog roast, with Rev. Robert and June Byler, former missionaries to Argentina who were supported by the Elkhart Church, as special guests; and an October 15 homecoming, with Ashland Theological Seminary professor Dr. Jerry Flora as guest speaker.

In addition, each month during the year has been set aside to represent a decade in the history of the Elkhart Church. Various Sunday school classes have been assigned to work with the Centennial Committee in planning a historical emphasis for each month.

— reported by Joan Stemm

Every day the media remind us that *America has a problem!* It is estimated that there are 3.3 million teenage alcoholics; 5,000 new users of cocaine each day; and 2,000 new crack users every twenty-four hours. Ten thousand young people ages 16-24 will die this year as a result of the use of alcohol; 57 children/adolescents try to kill themselves every hour — that's more than 1,300 every day. Teenagers are the only age group whose longevity is decreasing.

— Youth for Christ news release



From  
The



Grape  
Vine

The Muncie Ind., First Brethren Church held a Mini-Missions Conference on February 18 and 19 with Missionary Board Executive Director Rev.

James R. Black and Brethren missionaries Rev. and Mrs. Ray Aspinall sharing about Brethren missions. On Saturday, Rev. Black showed a video he took in Mexico City and Ray and Marilyn Aspinall explained their work in Argentina and Colombia. Then on Sunday morning, during the Sunday school hour Rev. Black presented a video he made in India, and Rev. Aspinall gave the message during the worship service. Following a carry-in dinner, Rev. Black gave an overview of all Brethren mission work.

Bernice Garrett, a member of the Oakville, Ind., First Brethren Church, turned 95 on March 5. She has been a

member of the Oakville congregation for more than 80 years.

Mrs. Doris Barnett was honored 1988 Christian Educator of the year by Hagerstown, Md., First Brethren Church on January 22. Certificates of appreciation for hard work over several years were given to Howard Sheeley, Gerald Cooper, Sr., Jackie Rogers, Ken Stottlemeyer, and William Cooper. Certificates for reading the entire Bible in 1988 were awarded to Tom Keberly, Helen Sweeney, Evelyn King, Ethel Geaslen, Beulah Lowman, Edith Cushen, Rev. Bruce Shanholtz, Thelma Shanholtz, and Pastor Harold Barnett.

## In Memory

Rev. Lester V. King, 94, retired Brethren pastor, died during Communion service at the New Paris, Ind., First Brethren Church on Palm Sunday. He was born August 12, 1894, near Orrville, Ohio. He attended one year at Wooster (Ohio) College Academy and three years at Ashland College before serving approximately 1½ years in the army during World War I.



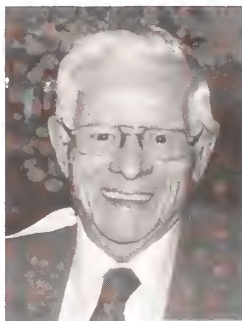
Following his discharge from the army he returned to Ashland College from which he received an A.B. degree in 1922. He then pastored the St. James, Md. (1922-25); New Lebanon, Ohio (1925-33); Mexico and Corinth, Ind. (1933-36); Oakville, Ind. (1936-41); Ashland Park Street (1941-46); Elkhart, Ind. (1946-52); Louisville, Ohio (1952-61); and Gretna, Ohio (1961-68), Brethren Churches. During his 46 years of pastoral ministry, he only missed one Sunday because of illness. In addition to his pastoral work, he faithfully served The Brethren Church in various capacities at the denominational and district levels. During his retirement years he also served for a time as chaplain of Brethren Care retirement home in Ashland.

On June 20, 1917, Brother King married Bessie Jane Humphrey of Williamstown, Ohio (who passed away July 10, 1975). They were the parents of five daughters (including two sets of twins). Three of the five served as Brethren missionaries, Janet (Fox) and Beatrice (Bischof) in Nigeria, and Jane (Byler) in Argentina. Rev. King is survived by the five daughters, 16 grandchildren, and 28 great-grandchildren.

Rev. King's funeral was held Thursday, March 23, at Park Street Brethren Church with Dr. Arden E. Gilmer, pas-

tor, officiating. Memorial contributions may be made to the New Paris First Brethren Church or to the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church.

Rev. J. Milton Bowman, 90, retired Brethren pastor, died March 1 in Lansing Mich. He was born June 27, 1889, in Philadelphia, Pa., the son of Brethren elder Dr. Isaac D. and Addie Bowman. He attended one year at Temple University in Philadelphia, three years at Wheaton College (A.B., 1931), and three years at Eastern Baptist Seminary (B.D., 1937). He was also a veteran of the U.S. Army. He pastored Brethren churches in Sergeantsville, N.J. (1931-38); Nappanee, Ind. (1938-49); Peru, Ind. (1949-55); Falls City, Neb., and Morrill, Kan. (1955-57); Elkhart, Ind. (1958-64); Stockton, Calif. (1965-67); and Newark, Ohio (1967-69).



Rev. Bowman and his wife Marguerite, who were married May 28, 1938, were the parents of four daughters, one of whom, Marguerite (Kraft), served as a Brethren missionary in Nigeria. He is survived by his wife and the daughters, 13 grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren.

The funeral service was held March 4 in Lansing Michigan, with Rev. W. Carlton Younge, pastor of the First Baptist Church, and Rev. James Bowden, pastor of Valley Farms Baptist Church and nephew of the deceased, officiating. Memorial contributions may be made to Child Evangelism Fellowship, 4410 S. Logan, Lansing, MI 48910.

Myrtle Justice, 83, March 1. Member for 44 years of the Masontown Brethren Church and president for more than 40 years of the Dorcas Sunday school class. Services by Pastor Russell King.

Hazel Penrod, 94, February 26. Faithful member of the North Manchester First

Brethren Church. Services by Rev. Woodrow Immel and Pastor Marlin McCann.

Marie Kiser, 89, February 22. Member for 70 years of the First Brethren Church of Elkhart. Services by Pastor Daniel Gray.

Helen H. DeBolt, 80, February 19. Member for 63 years of the Masontown Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Russell C. King.

Ernest E. Eschbach, 62, February 19. Member of the North Manchester First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Marlin McCann and Rev. Woodrow Immel.

Margaret Rorabaugh, 76, February 14. Member of the Vinco Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Carl Phillips.

Nana F. Adams, 82, February 6. Faithful member of the Walcrest Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Dave Hoyt.

Ryan Hershberger, 7, February 6. Member of the First Brethren Church of Elkhart. Services by Pastor Daniel Gray.

Lucy Grass Ball, 95, January 15. Member of the First Brethren Church of Oakville. Services by Pastor Dan Lawson.

Alice Fisher, 91, January 13. Member for 38 years of the First Brethren Church of Elkhart. Services by Pastor Daniel Gray.

## Goldenaires

Ora and Ruby Greer, 60th, April 6. Members of the Corinth Brethren Church.  
Herbert and Esther Weaver, 50th, March 4. Members of the Pleasant Hill First Brethren Church.

## Weddings

Tracy Wages to Mike Haston, January 21, at the Oakville First Brethren Church; Pastor Dan Lawson officiating.

Tammy Madison to Brian Wilkinson, January 14, at the Oakville First Brethren Church; Pastor Dan Lawson officiating.

## Membership Growth

Muncie: 2 by baptism

Falls City: 5 by transfer

Roann: 5 by baptism, 1 by transfer

Linwood: 2 by baptism, 1 by transfer

Oakville: 2 by baptism, 5 by transfer

# Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).



## SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

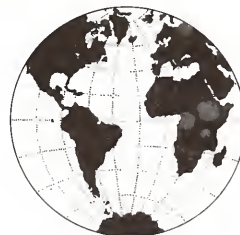
April is springtime in the northern half of this good earth. Seeds sprout. A green haze of new leaves fills the trees. Daffodils, tulips, and crocus flowers break through the brown soil and show off their gorgeous colors. Animals give birth to their young, and baby birds hatch from their eggs. Life is renewed after a cold winter. What a beautiful world God has given to us to enjoy and care for! Take time to see, hear, and smell all its wonders. Then take time to praise God for His amazing creation.

### King David's Message

To find out what King David wrote about the earth, write the letter of the alphabet that comes **after** each letter shown; z will equal an a.

"Sgd vnqkc zmc zkk sgzs hr hm hs adknmf sn sgd Knqc;  
\_\_\_\_\_

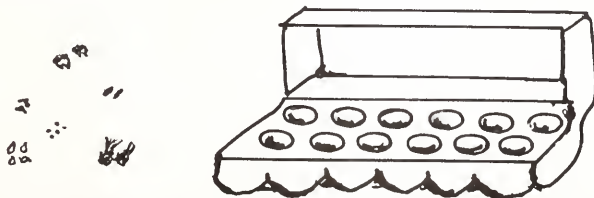
sgd dzqsg zmc zkk vgn khud nm hs zqd Ghr." Psalm 24:1, TEV  
\_\_\_\_\_



A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

### A Game and a Collection

1. Look around your house and see if you can find 12 pairs of seeds. You could collect two dried beans from the kitchen cupboard, two seeds from an apple you eat, two from an orange, two from the squash you have for dinner. See how many things you can find seeds in! Isn't it amazing how different seeds "know" just what kind of plant to grow into!
2. Find an empty egg carton that you can keep your collection in.
3. Mix up all your seeds and see how quickly you can sort them by pairs into your egg carton. Have a friend make a collection too! You can decorate your seed carton with crayons and label each "hole" according to the seeds.



### It's Alive!

Soak some seeds in water overnight and then plant them in potting soil in a yogurt cup, small butter tub, or small plastic pot.

Be sure to water the planted seeds gently. Then cover the pot with plastic wrap and secure it with a rubber band. This will be like a mini-greenhouse for your seedling.

Keep it in a warm place. Remove the top when the green "baby" peeks out of the soil. Seeds are little miracles of life!





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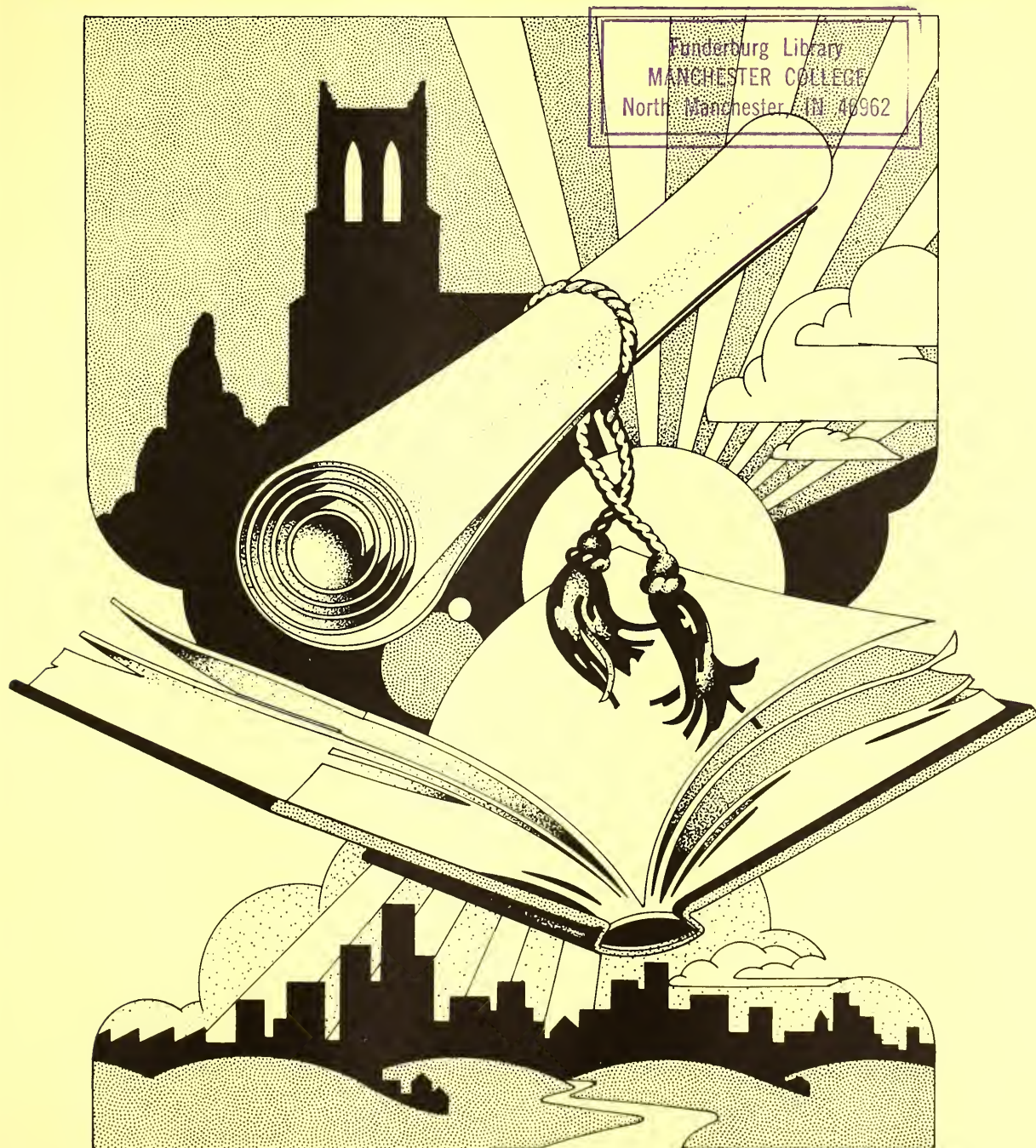
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# THE BRETHREN **Evangelist**

MAY 1989



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# the salt shaker

by Alvin Shifflett

## Theological Comfort Zones

LAST SUMMER I received in the mail two copies (yes, two!) of the book *88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Be in 1988*. Believe me, a lot of research went into this little book. Unfortunately, the author lost his credibility when he stated that September 12 or 13 (he wasn't sure which), 1988, was the day on which the "rapture" of the church would occur. He also said that on September 21, 1988, the Antichrist would sign a peace pact with Israel, and that on October 4, 1988, World War III would begin at sunset.

### A theological nut

I enjoyed reading the man's thoughts. He challenged my thinking as he attempted to climb into my theological comfort zone. Nevertheless, I don't think I'm being unkind by saying that the author is a theological nut. On the other hand, I have to admit that on September 12 and 13 last year, I worked doubly hard and kept an eye to the clouds. I didn't want to miss anything.

So far you've probably agreed with me, since I haven't disturbed your theological comfort zone. You see, we all have and love such comfort zones. Change is often disturbing, unsettling. New ideas — or progressive revelation, as the early Brethren called it — rocks our boat. And we don't like that. It's easier to brand such new ideas as heresy.

So what is this theological comfort zone? It is the system of truth we have accepted that tends to put all the pieces of life's puzzle together

into one nice big picture. This system makes thinking easier and eliminates confusion.

### The easy way

The problem with our theological comfort zones is that we rely upon others — mentors and/or peers — to provide us our system of belief. It's easier that way. In this busy 20th century, it's much easier to accept what others say than to dig out the truth for ourselves.

Now don't misunderstand me. When the early Brethren spoke of progressive revelation, they certainly were not suggesting that all past ideas were wrong. They were merely searching and remaining open. They were willing to say, "Let's not get lulled to sleep in a theological comfort zone."

The truth is, however, even theological theories of a late date can sometimes become comfortable systems of alleged truth. Did you know, for example, that the idea of a "rapture" is a recent concept unknown before the 1800's? In fact, church history before 1800 had not even taken into account a seven year tribulation period. These theological positions did not come into vogue until the 19th century, when they were popularized by the Plymouth Brethren, J.N. Darby, and later the Scofield Bible.

Dr. Harry A. Ironside became a strong exponent of these beliefs. J.N. Darby visited the U.S. six times between 1850 and 1874 expounding his "pre-tribulationist" position of a

secret rapture of the church followed by seven years of world tribulation, etc. Most of his views ended up in Dr. C.I. Scofield's Bible, on which I cut my spiritual teeth.

But dismay of dismay, a number of great Bible teachers — among them G. Campbell Morgan, Oswald J. Smith, and Dr. Harold J. Ockenga — did *not* accept the teachings of Darby, the Plymouth Brethren, and others. And that great prayer warrior George Müller actually parted company with his friend, J.N. Darby over these theological issues.

Obviously, our theological comfort zones can deaden the spirit. One can cling too much to the past, or bank too much on current theories about the future. On the other hand, it's just plain tough to become fully enlightened in this day and age.

When I first went to seminary, I didn't even know who John Calvin was, and I had never heard of the rapture or the Great Tribulation.

Fortunately, another student took me aside and said, "Al, you need to get this stuff straight. Go to the bookstore and buy Clarence Larkin's book, *Dispensational Truth*. I went straight to the store and got Brother Clarence and memorized all his charts. Now the most dangerous thing in the world is a young seminarian packin' around the Larkin charts like an assault weapon!"

### Beware of the omniscient

Beware of someone who knows it all and has it all laid out, like the author of *88 Reasons*. It's nice to be enlightened, but dangerous to think you omniscient.

As I type this, I can see on my bookshelf Larkin's book alongside books by Hal Lindsey, Ironside, Walvoord, and (whoops) William Barclay, G. Campbell Morgan, Spurgeon, H. Orton Wiley, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, etc. If these fellows were all alive and in this room, there'd be a terrible fight.

I remember well the day one good Doctor of Theology walked into my office and boomed, "What's Berkhof's *Systematic Theology* doing beside Shank's *Life in the Son*?" I was scared, just plain intimidated. I moved those books. It's much easier to bury your head in a neat theological system and stay there, like an ostrich, until the Lord comes. [†]

THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST  
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## Cover:

May and early June is graduation time. Therefore this month's cover is dedicated to Brethren students who are graduating from high school, college, or seminary this year. May the Lord bless you and lead you into avenues of service for Him and others as you leave school and face the world and the opportunities that lie before you.

## Answers to Little Crusader Page:

**Famous Mothers of the Bible:** Mary—Jesus; Elizabeth—John the Baptist; Hannah—Samuel; Jochebed—Moses, Aaron, and Miriam; Sarah—Isaac; Rebekah—Jacob and Esau.

**An Important Commandment:** "Honor your father and mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you" (Exodus 20:12).



# Revive Your Church, O Lord!

By Juan Carlos Miranda

*This article is an edited version of a message Dr. Miranda presented at the National Association of Evangelicals Board of Administration dinner, held Monday evening, March 6, just prior to the opening of this year's NAE convention. Dr. Miranda served as program coordinator for the convention.*

WHEN this year's convention theme, "Revive Your Church, O Lord!" was announced, two things came to my mind. The first was a chorus that we used to sing in our churches in my native land of Argentina. It went like this:

*Señor te pedimos un avivamiento,  
Un avivamiento que empiece primero en mí.*

Or for you who do not understand the heavenly language, it goes something like this:

*O Lord, for revival we pray,  
A revival that will first begin in me.*

The second thing that came to my mind when the convention theme was announced was the prayer of a man and his son who are members of the Hispanic Brethren church that I pastor in Baldwin Park, Calif. During a prayer meeting Don Honorino and his fourteen-year-old son, both of whom found the Lord less than two years ago, prayed very

*Dr. Miranda is a Brethren pastor, supervisor of Hispanic Ministries for The Brethren Church, and founder/director of the Department of Hispanic Ministries of the Charles E. Fuller Institute of Evangelism and Church Growth.*

specifically, "Revive Your Church, O Lord." These two men have not had much time to learn about the Bible. They've had even less opportunity to learn theology or study church history or read about the great revivals. But one thing they did learn: You must pray for revival!

What a beautiful experience it was to hear them pray that night! No one had requested prayer for revival that evening. Their prayer came from the heart of two new Christians who realized that our church needs to be revived. I am not certain they could have given a good

definition for revival, but they had learned to pray for it.

What is revival anyway? What is the meaning of the word? According to Webster's dictionary, revival is first an "Act or instance of reviving, state of being revived." Second, revival of religion is "renewed interest in religion after indifference and decline, a period of religious awakening." How well this latter definition describes the need for revival in these days in which we are living!

But let us focus a little more on the first word of our theme, "Revive!" The same dictionary tells us:

*Juan Carlos Miranda (r.), with Billy Melvin (l.), executive director of the National Association of Evangelicals, and John H. White, NAE president, during a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the 1989 NAE convention.*

Photo by  
Don Huntsberger  
courtesy NAE



***“Revive Your Church, O Lord!” . . . should be more than a convention theme. It should be more than a nice phrase. It must become the cry of our hearts.”***

“Revive . . . to restore or return to consciousness or life, to reanimate. To raise from languor, depression or discouragement; to render or become active, operative, or flourishing again. To recover from a state of neglect or disuse.” Doesn’t the present state of the church meet the conditions defined by Webster — conditions which need to be revived?

### **Revival and evangelism**

Revivals have been closely related to evangelism. Dr. Mendell Taylor in his book, *Exploring Evangelism*, wrote: “This term revival has many facets. It has been applied to any movement that revives, or revitalizes, or reawakens. This may follow a twofold pattern: 1) a general revivalistic movement; 2) a revival awakening at the local level.” Evidence proves that we need both.

The same author reminds us “that revivalism and evangelism may be summarized like this: 1) Revivalism is by periods; evangelism is perennial; 2) Revival is the Lord at work in the church; evangelism is the church at work for the Lord; 3) Revival is concerned with the conservation of spiritual realities; evangelism concentrates on the conversion of those who are aliens to spiritual realities; and 4) In revivalism the accent is on the prevailing atmosphere, while in evangelism it is on the transforming decision for Christ.”

Throughout the centuries of church history, we find what have been called “the great revivals.” According to James Burnes in his book, *Revivals: Their Laws and Leaders*, “Six general Revivalistic Movements have dotted the history of Christianity. They were: The revival under St. Francis of Assisi; Savonarola and the Florentine Revival; Luther and the revival in Germany; Calvin and the Swiss revival; John Knox and the revival in Scotland; and Wesley and the Evangelical revival.” Others could be added to this list.

In more recent times — since 1910 — religious revivals must be seen against the backdrop of two world wars. The *Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* traces the line of revival succession to D.L. Moody, Billy Sunday, and Billy Graham. It also tells us that important evidence of revival other than mass evangelism were the growing numbers of theological education institutions and conferences, and the Christian use of radio, television, and films.

The missionary enterprise also provides evidence that revival is taking place, not only at home but also on the mission fields in many countries. The growth of the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association and the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association provides significant evidence of revival in missions.

### **Negative developments**

Unfortunately, paralleling mass evangelism and other efforts at revival within the evangelical movement has been the emergence of various sects and cults. And the *Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* reminds us of other negative developments in our society. It notes that “the overall effect of this revival of religion in America can be measured somewhat objectively by noting the steady increase in the proportion of church members to the total population. However, parental and juvenile delinquency, corruption in government, the hold of gambling upon people, and the entrenchment of organized crime indicate that there is still a great need of religious revival.”

This could be cause for much discouragement were it not for the faithful promise we have in Scripture: “. . . where sin abounded, grace did much more abound” (Rom. 5:20).

We must be careful not to confuse evangelical events with revival. Not all evangelism, not all mission, not everything that is done in the name

of the Lord is revival.

Last August I was reading an invitation from the Greater Pasadena Concert of Prayer for the month of September. One of the three major prayer concerns was the “apathy of the church.” This caught my eye and reminded me that until “apathy” is removed from our hearts and our churches, we will not see a “revived church.” We have grown too comfortable in our sacred pulpits and pews. If we are going to pray, “Revive your Church, O Lord!” we must mean it and be willing to pay the price. It will need to be more than a convention theme or a nice thought to share with our church people. It must be the cry of the heart, a humbling of ourselves, recognizing that only then can we be the channels of God’s power for this revival.

Not long ago I was reading a sermon by D.L. Moody on the theme, “How to Promote Revival.” His four major points were:

- I. We Must Believe in Revivals.
- II. We Must Get Things Out of the Way for a Revival.
- III. If We Want a Revival in Our Churches, We Must Pray for It.
- IV. We Must Not Only Pray for a Revival, We Must Work for It.

### **Do we really want revival?**

Moody’s closing words in this sermon were: “Brethren, we have this matter of revival very largely in our hands. God is ready — are we? Do we really want a revival more than anything else in the world? Are we praying for it? Are we determined to pray for it until it comes? Are we living such lives that God can hear us? ‘If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.’ The Lord helps us to prepare the way of the Lord, that He may come among us in power!”

How relevant this sermon is for the days in which we live! The Word of God has not changed. God’s power has not changed. If revival has not come, it is because He is waiting for



## ***"I challenge each one of us to be an instrument in God's hand — to pray and to work for revival."***

our prayers and our work to fulfill His promises.

Charles Finney was a leader in what was probably the best example of a revival awakening at the local church level. In his *Lectures on Revivals of Religion*, written in 1876, he enumerates seven signs of approaching revival. According to Finney, revival is near:

- "1) When the providence of God indicates that a revival is at hand.
- 2) When the wickedness of the wicked grieves and humbles and distresses Christians.
- 3) When Christians have a spirit of prayer for a revival.
- 4) When the attention of ministers is specially directed to revival.
- 5) When Christians begin to confess their sins to one another.
- 6) When Christians are found willing to make the sacrifice necessary to carry it on.
- 7) When ministers and professors are willing to have God promote it by what instruments he pleases."

Have we seen some of these signs? Are the times telling us that revival is drawing near?

Even though these points were written over one hundred years ago, they seem timely for today. We have not been able to find a way to predict or forecast when God will send revival, but it has always been preceded by much prayer.

### **The Scriptures and revival**

Now let us look into the Scriptures. Chapter 3 of the Book of Habakkuk has been called the prayer of an alarmed prophet. Well, Habbakuk had reason to be alarmed. "O LORD, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid." It was the communication from God concerning the punishment of Judah and the destruction of Chaldea. So he prays: "O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years . . ."

The work referred to was the purification of Judah by means of the Chaldean exile and the salvation of Judah by the ultimate overthrow of her oppressor. It was a picture of God's work in all ages — the revival

of the individual and the revival of the church in general.

The prophet was praying for Israel. We are praying for the Church: "Revive Your Church, O Lord!" It is and should be more than a convention theme. It should be more than a nice phrase. It must become the cry of our hearts.

---

***"We have not been able to find a way to predict or forecast when God will send revival, but it has always been preceded by much prayer."***

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We are living in times when individuals and the church need to be revived. The last two or three years have been years when the church suffered strikes from within. As individuals, we should cry with the Psalmist, "Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things. And revive me in Your way" (Ps. 119:37).

As a church we are reminded, "If my people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and forgive their sins and heal their land" (II Chron. 7:14). This is an earnest supplication for the revival of God's work of grace in the hearts of His people in a time of outward distress.

Yes, we need a deeper work of grace in the hearts of those who are the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. We need the Lord to pour out His Spirit upon His people. It is not enough to look to the past and rejoice with what was done, with the revivals found in Scriptures, or those throughout the centuries of Christian history. We need revival today.

Many of us have been involved in and will continue to be a part of what has been called "Toward the Year 2000," "Revival to the Year 2000," "The Unfinished Task," "The Unreached Peoples of the World." The year 2000 seems to be the deadline for all these efforts. The recent Con-

gress in Singapore, Consultation on A.D. 2000 and Beyond, proved once more that Christians are working with definite goals in mind. The forthcoming International Congress on World Evangelization in Manila will also bring forth plans and activities to reach those goals under the theme "Proclaim Christ Until He Comes! A call to the whole Church, to take the whole Gospel, to the Whole World."

How can all these goals be reached? Perhaps here we should look to the experiences of the past. It was said of them, "As believers were revived, they displayed a deep burden for the lost both at home and abroad." We need this kind of experience; we need this kind of revival.

God wants us to be revived. He admonishes us, "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know" (Jer. 33:3). Do we want revival? Are we willing to pay the price? Are we willing to find out great and mighty things, which we do not know?

### **A challenge**

I challenge each one of us to be an instrument in God's hand — to pray and to work for revival. Let us unite ourselves in a call for revival. Let us pray that we may feel a movement of the Holy Spirit warming our hearts and bringing about revival first in us. In the words of that old chorus from my childhood, let us join together in saying:

*O Lord, for revival we pray,  
A revival that first will begin  
in me!*

Yes, let us be in our congregations — believers who will pray as Don Honorino and his son prayed: "Revive Your Church, O Lord!" Let us pray that this time will go down in history as one that marked the beginning of revival in God's church at the end of the 20th century. It is possible if we are willing. God is ready! Are we? [†]

---

*See pages 16 and 17 for more information about the recent NAE convention and the subject of revival.*

# Doing Our Part

By Loma G. Davies

**M**ANY OF US will never do "great things" for God. We have been put on earth to serve in our little corner and to brighten it with our small candle. We are to make sure we do not "hide it under a bushel." Our candle may not light up the whole world, but it can "brighten the corner where we are."

We often feel that because our work is virtually unseen by others, it is unimportant. Our task may not be as visible as the work of those who sing, play musical instruments, or preach. Maybe we take care of the nursery, clean the church, or make clothes for missionaries.

Nevertheless, even though these tasks are not really seen, others would certainly notice if they were

left undone. Think for a moment how noisy the worship service would be if people did not volunteer to take care of the children in the nursery. Or imagine what the church would look like if no one cleaned it. Not a pretty sight!

Likewise, consider how the missionaries depend on the items supplied by missionary societies. Think how their work would be hindered if missionary societies stopped doing their job because no one noticed.

No matter whether our task is great or small, we are to do it for the Lord and not in order to be praised by others. In fact, if we do it for the praise of others, Christ says that we have already received our reward. Matthew 6:2 states, "Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the

hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward."

But perhaps we ask, "Since there are so many others working, will my little candle be missed? This story helps answer that question.

One day Sir Michael Costa was conducting a rehearsal of an orchestra and a large chorus. About halfway through the session, as the trumpets blared, the drums rolled, and the violins played, the piccolo player muttered to himself, "What good am I doing? I might just as well not be playing. Nobody can hear me anyway." So he kept the instrument to his mouth, but made no sound.

Within moments the conductor cried, "Stop! Stop! Where's the piccolo?" It was missed by the ear of the most important person of all, the conductor.

That's how we should view our service for God. It may appear completely unimportant to us. Those around us may likewise consider it insignificant. But they are not the ones we should try to please. If we don't do our task, God will miss it. We don't want Him to have to ask us why we didn't do our part.

Do you remember the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30)? The master expected each of his servants to use the talents each was given. In fact, he severely reprimanded the servant who buried his one talent.

Since God has given each of us at least one talent, let us make sure we do not have to face His rebuke at the Judgment Seat. When we see Christ, it would be wonderful if each of us could hear, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." [†]

*Mrs. Davies is a free-lance writer who lives in Onaga, Kans.*



*Just as a picture-puzzle is incomplete when one of the pieces is missing, just so the work of the church is incomplete when we fail to do our part.* Photo by Loma G. Davies.



# Revealing Our Inner Selves

By Elaine (Hensley) Brelsford



**K**ATELYN was on the phone again. I was Katelyn's adoption caseworker. Several weeks earlier, Katelyn had placed her baby in our agency's care so that her child could be adopted into a two-parent family, an environment she desired for the baby but could not herself provide.

Today's conversation was important, Katelyn said. She wanted to have another baby. She and her boyfriend had begun living together and had decided to have a baby as soon as possible.

I knew that Katelyn had not yet dealt with the grief and loss from an earlier abortion, or from placing her second child for adoption. I was also aware of the deep level of alcoholism and physical abuse in her family. I agreed with Katelyn that this was, indeed, an important conversation.

As Katelyn spoke, I listened carefully to her plans. She desperately wanted to establish a family of her own, vowing to herself that *her* family would be different. But as the conversation progressed to a deeper level and I tried to get her to examine her feelings and the motives resulting from those feelings, she would return each time to her

plans and cling to them for whatever false security they provided. She could hold onto her plans, but she could not address the pain, fears, and emptiness deep within herself.

## Life's daily struggles

M. Scott Peck begins his book, *The Road Less Traveled*, with the simple statement, "Life is difficult." Indeed, it takes only a brief observation of humanity to learn that the rains of adversity fall on the just as well as the unjust.

The Christian, however, is faced with the dilemma of balancing victory and human struggles. We've tasted God's redemption, yet we exist in a complicated, fast-paced society where the drama and stress of our lives refuse to be resolved in the 30 minutes allocated to television families tackling similar problems. Inside, we continue to face nagging daily pressures of addictive lifestyles, disappointing marriage relationships, dealing with defiant teens, caring for elderly parents, coping with singleness, and a host of other challenges, while at the same time making every effort to appear presentable and acceptable on the outside.

We have an internal conversation with ourselves instructing us that we have to offer a pleasant exterior at work. We tell ourselves that we must appear strong for the sake of

our children or other family members. We even convince ourselves that God will be disappointed in us if we allow others to see the hurt inside of us. We ultimately begin to wonder if we are internally flawed, because we don't see other Christians coping as badly as we are.

## Are we really "fine"?

Recently in an airport, I watched a well-dressed, distinguished-looking gentleman painstakingly make his way, with the use of a cane, toward the ticket counter. After much time, he reached his destination. He carefully leaned his body against the counter, making sure he was stabilized, and hooked his cane on the counter surface, as the airline employee routinely chirped, "How are you?"

The man was out of breath, and beads of perspiration had emerged on his forehead. But with a touch of humor and a warm smile he replied, "Oh, I'm just fine . . . Aren't we all just fine?"

My curiosity was heightened, because this gentleman had chosen an unlikely place and time to eliminate superficial conversation. His reply made an impact on the attendant, who sadly answered, "No, but I guess your problem just shows. I can hide mine."

*Mrs. Brelsford was raised in the Mt. Olive Brethren Church, is a graduate of Ashland Theological Seminary, and has worked as a social worker. She now lives with her husband, Gregg, in Charleston, S.C. She wrote this article at the request of the General Conference Social Concerns Committee.*

In many ways, the airline attendant was correct. We can attempt to hide our inner selves using various strategies. Like Katelyn, we can immerse ourselves in new plans, hoping that our internal pain will subside when new circumstances are introduced. We can avoid close relationships in an effort to protect ourselves from further hurt. We can blame others for our struggles, ranging from pinpointing individuals to blaming an entire gender. We can expend generous effort in attempting to change our spouses, parents, friends, and co-workers, with the end result of feeling exhausted and spiritually empty.

When we go to church, we look for some relief. We sing the hymns, pass the offering plate, and resolve during the prayer time to pray and read the Bible more this week. We try to focus on the sermon, but our minds wander to the problems left unsolved, unspoken. The final hymn is sung, the benediction pronounced. Now, as parishioners file from the church, we hear the resounding echos of, "Hello, how are you?" and the reply, "Fine, just fine."

### How can we grow?

Those who will honestly admit that this has been their experience will also admit to driving out of the church parking lot with a growing conviction that there must be more. There must be more joy, more trust, more compassion, more acceptance, and more love in order for us to truly feel that the church has made a difference in our personal struggles.

It is here that some serious personal decisions must be faced. Some choose to leave the institutional church. Others stay but enter into a sullen state of lukewarmness. A third group stays and makes a commitment to gain perspective on the situation. Members of this group realize that just as individuals are in the sometimes sticky process of conforming to the image of Christ, so is the church. This group wants honest answers that reflect God's wisdom, and they are willing to risk relinquishing the superficial in order to attain Christian maturity both individually and corporately.

Where does such growth begin? It requires taking an honest look at

who we really are on the inside. Are we letting go of our petty concerns and our trite conversations with fellow Christians in order to truly expose our thoughts, feelings, and, yes, even our inner secrets to those struggling with us as we become more aware of God's presence? By agreeing to end the pretense that everything is fine in our lives, we can confront the conflicts that sometimes threaten to overwhelm us.

In Matthew 23:28, Jesus expresses His interest in our internal condition when He candidly tells the Pharisees, "On the outside you appear to people as righteous, but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness." Jesus makes it clear to those who profess to follow Him that whitewashing for vanity's sake is not an acceptable means of coping. He is interested in an honest approach, allowing no room for pretense.

### Admitting and accepting

Some months ago, I was asked to consult with a Christian maternity home. The board of directors was puzzled by a loss of residents and a lack of new clients, even though there was every indication that the home's services were critically needed in the area.

After meeting with the directors and learning the home's requirements, it became clear to me that the mother of Jesus probably would have been turned away from this agency. An extremely rigid and unrealistic set of rules for the residents portrayed the directors' ideal of a "good" Christian. The end result was hurt, angry women who left the program with a distorted concept of God's grace. The transformation of these women's lives by God's power was not a realized goal. The directors' act of reducing Christianity to external issues prevented ministering to internal need.

Leaving our facades and pretenses behind is difficult enough. But James urges us to go one step further when he instructs us to confess our sins to one another (James 5:16). Now that's truly risky business! In fact, the thought of actually doing so probably makes most of us experience perspiring palms and shallow, rapid breathing.

Alcoholics Anonymous and a

number of other support groups apply this biblical principle with great success. They know that the healing process begins when an individual progresses from denying that problems exist to actually confessing them in the presence of one or several peers. These groups begin their meetings with something similar to

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***"By agreeing to end the pretense that everything is fine in our lives, we can confront the conflicts that sometimes threaten to overwhelm us."***

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this: "Hello, my name is Roger, and I am an alcoholic." "Hello, my name is Barbara, and I'm addicted to food." "Hello, my name is Mark, and I'm addicted to cocaine." Meeting after meeting, these active confessions remain a vital part of the agenda.

King David went through a similar experience to that illustrated above when Nathan arrived to discuss the sin David had committed with Bathsheba. It was only after David admitted to Nathan that he had sinned against God that David could experience a deeper relationship with the Lord (II Sam. 12:13).

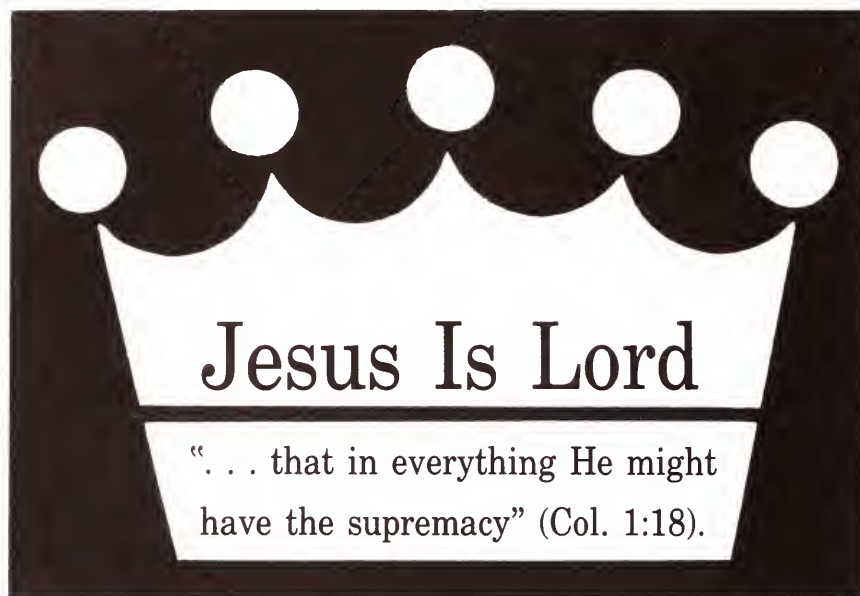
Openness toward and acceptance of our own weaknesses frees us to be more open and accepting of others. Allowing ourselves to pursue transparent and committed relationships places us in a position to hear and understand God's vision. Struggles aren't likely to cease, but we can learn to respond creatively to them. As we agree to combat superficiality, possibilities for success exist for us both as individuals and corporately within the church. [†]

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### Questions for Reflection and for Discussion with Others

1. How can we create a climate in our churches that will enable people to face and admit their true feelings?
2. How can we help people accept their inner feelings so that they are free to accept the behavior and inner feelings of others?
3. How can we provide the time and place for people to be honest with each other?
4. How can we assure people that God forgives and accepts them?





By Moderator Kenneth L. Sullivan

**I**T is an amazing thing to see God move a people toward a desired end! His hand surely has been at work among the Brethren, for we have observed our people expressing a willingness to submit to Christ's Lordship in both word and deed. We have learned to set aside our personal agendas for that of our Lord, and we have recaptured the concept of obedience so important to the success of any ministry.

### More than spectators

I often feel like a spectator watching these events unfold. Hearts have been changed, new direction has been provided, and a new vision has become the shared hope of the Brethren as we anticipate God's work among us. But we must not forget that God's work includes the combined action of our work with His. We are to be more than spectators; we are to be participants. God invites us to involve ourselves in His work, to take seriously our own commitment to it, "to work out [our] salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12).

We have made such a commitment. When our representatives voted at General Conference to adopt the recommendations for reorganization and the hiring of a Director of Brethren Church Ministries, we committed ourselves to a bold new form of ministry for The

Brethren Church. The delegates at General Conference are the voice of each local church speaking in unison regarding their convictions concerning God's direction for our church. They are your voice speaking for you: their vote was your vote; their commitment was your commitment; and their faith in the future was yours as well. We are committed.

Commitment to Christ's church commands a response at the level that sparks the greatest controversy — our financial giving. We have talked much concerning the affordability of denominational programs. Yet I continue to observe that well-meaning Brethren people send dollars to ministries outside our denomination, some of which operate with financial procedures that are suspect or questionable at best.

### Our primary responsibility

I am convinced that Brethren have sufficient monies to fund anything we believe God wants us to do. What is at stake is our priority of giving. God calls us to be stewards of the resources at our disposal. Our giving should flow out of our obedience to God and of our commitment to those works within the realm of our primary responsibility. If there are any Brethren who do not understand what their primary responsibility in ministry is, let me state it clearly: it is your local church, your

district, and the denomination of which you are a part. Everything else is of secondary concern.

I am not suggesting that ministries beyond the borders of the Brethren are unimportant or that

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***"If there are any Brethren who do not understand what their primary responsibility in ministry is, let me state it clearly: it is your local church, your district, and the denomination of which you are a part."***

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they should not be supported. I am saying that they should be of secondary concern. Our primary responsibility is to the work of our local church, including the denomination of which it is a part. When that obligation is met, then we are free to support other Christian works.

### Priorities in giving

Too often our giving is based on impulse or feeling. God never asks us to give on that basis. Giving is an act of obedience based on our commitment to that to which our Lord has called us. Priorities should be established from biblical guidelines and principles. They should not be determined by good selling techniques. When I read my Bible, my Lord's first priority and concern is His church. That being so, the church and only the church should have priority in our giving.

Brethren, we have covenanted together in a new work. It requires our mutual support, prayers, and the stewardship of our financial resources. Corporately God has provided everything necessary for the success of Brethren ministries. All that is needed is our obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ in the funding of the local, district, and national works; our accountability to one another; and a responsible life of faith lived under the Lordship of Christ as Brethren.

Now is the time for sacrificial giving, sacrificial living, sacrificial ministry, that in all things Jesus may have the supremacy. [†]

# Plans for 1989 General Conference At Manchester College Well Underway

By J. Michael Drushal, Conference Coordinator

**P**LANNING is well underway for the 1989 General Conference of The Brethren Church, scheduled for August 7-11. This year's Conference theme is "Jesus Is Lord," centered on Colossians 1:18.

In addition to the moderator's address by Rev. Kenneth Sullivan, pastor of the Milledgeville, Ill., Brethren Church, we can look forward to hearing our keynote speaker, John Perkins, from the John M. Perkins Foundation for Reconciliation and Development, Pasadena, Calif., as well as several of our fine Brethren pastors, who will speak on various aspects of our Conference theme.

Also in the planning stages is another series of excellent workshops, including one by Clyde Weaver, a much-traveled worker from Elgin, Ill., who will speak on "Religion Under Gorbachev: Open Window or Window Dressing?"

As you know, this year's Conference will be held in North Manchester, Ind., on the campus of Manchester College. This change is an attempt to offer persons who do not find it possible to come to Ashland an opportunity to attend Conference.



*Cordier Auditorium on the Manchester College campus, where the main General Conference sessions will be held this August.*

Manchester College administers its facility differently than Ashland College does, so we will notice some changes in housing and meal procedures. We are being offered a package price that includes a room for the week and all meals (including banquets and luncheons). A meal package without housing will also be available for those not staying on campus. Individual meals may likewise be purchased, as well as

housing for less than the full week, but preference will be given to those who register for the whole week.

This year's General Conference should be another inspirational time with the Brethren. More details about the Conference will be forthcoming as the week approaches. Reservation forms and additional information will appear in the next issue of the *EVANGELIST* and in the next *Leadership Letter*.

## A Request From the Committee on Committees

The General Conference Committee on Committees is in the process of formulating a slate of nominees for General Conference Committees to be voted on at the 1989 General Conference.

If you are interested in serving on any of these committees but never have had the opportunity to do so or never have been asked to serve, now is your chance to express your willingness to minister in this way.

The Committee on Committees is looking for people interested in serving on the following committees:

**Nominating Committee:** Two elders, two laymen, and two laywomen to be elected for one-year terms.

**Committee on Committees:** Two elders, two laymen, and two laywomen to be elected for one-year terms.

**Church Polity Committee:** One person to be elected for a five-year term.

**Rules and Organization Committee:** One person to be elected for a three-year term.

**Goals Committee:** Two persons to be elected for three-year terms.

**Worship Committee:** Three to be elected for three-year terms.

**Publicity Committee:** Three to be elected for one-year terms.

**Ways and Means Committee:** Any number to be elected for one-year terms.

**Conference Membership:** Seven to be elected for one-year terms.

**Hospitality:** Any number to be elected for one-year terms.

**Tellers:** Any number to be elected for one-year terms.

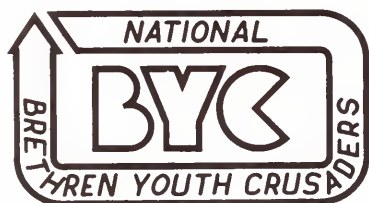
For a complete listing of duties and responsibilities of these committees, please refer to pages 13-16 of the General Conference *Manual of Procedure*. These should be available from the pastor of every congregation.

If you wish to have your name included in the slate of nominees presented to General Conference, please write as soon as possible to:

Tom Schiefer, Chairman  
Committee on Committees  
220 E. Locust  
Lanark, IL 61046

*(Note: Nominations from the floor are also accepted for General Conference Committees. This request is only for those who wish to have their names included on the printed slate of nominees.)*





# What BYC Means to Me

By Mark Ray

National Moderator of Brethren Youth Crusaders

**I**T IS DIFFICULT to capture in a word or words exactly what the BYC is. In fact, it probably means different things to different people. Brethren youth in Arizona probably have a different concept of BYC than those in Virginia. However, there is a common trait: a commitment to serve God and The Brethren Church in some special way.

Just recently I had the opportunity to hear a performance of a children's musical in a Brethren Church in which approximately 40 children participated. I have also been witness to another outstanding group of children from my own home church. It is exciting to see the work that is being done with many children within The Brethren Church. But what is just as thrilling is the realization that these children are approaching the moment when they will enter the Brethren Youth Crusaders (BYC).

Why is this so exciting? Because BYC means support, encouragement, fellowship, friends, and growing relationships with Christ. This is everything that is impor-

tant to teenage Christians growing up in a non-Christian world. This network of support and friendship reaches all across America even into India, Malaysia, and South America. The lasting friendships that develop at district and national functions can only benefit the future of The Brethren Church.

Through the BYC, youth are encouraged to be service-oriented by serving the Lord, His church, and one another. At the national level, the BYC is raising funds for the Town and Country Community Church in Tampa, Florida. Local service may include singing special music for a Sunday morning worship service or cleaning the church for a special weekend.

*Brethren Youth is a channel through which teens can grow spiritually and serve faithfully the Lord and The Brethren Church.*

What are some ways the BYC is working? Check the contributions to recent editions of *The Morning Star*, our National BYC magazine.

## Southeastern District

First a note from, the Southeast District.

The Fall Rally was held October 14-15 at the Oak Hill First Brethren Church in West Virginia. Many youth groups had a five or six hour drive, but according to reports afterwards the drive was well worth it. Sherry Bowling created a special game



*Approximately 40 young people attended the Southeastern District Fall Youth Rally, which was held at the Oak Hill, W. Va., First Brethren Church.*

*BYC Moderator Mark Ray, a member of the Milford, Ind., First Brethren Church, is a freshman at Ashland College. In writing this article, Mark used reports of local BYC activities contributed by Steve Gentle, Becky Brooke, Shawn Fox, Kimberly Wilkins, Christina Norris, Dixie Wehrman, Tony Price, and Dawn Kidd.*



*"Brethren Youth is a channel through which teens can grow spiritually and serve faithfully the Lord and The Brethren Church."*

called The Friendship Game to help the BYCers make new friends, and then refreshments and a movie concluded the arrival activities. On Saturday, October 15, a morning breakfast provided by the Oak Hill Brethren Church got the day off to a good start. Then the National BYC Moderator shared what his plans were for the national organization.

In the afternoon, participants in the Southeastern District Fall BYC Rally visited the New River Gorge Bridge during the annual bridge day. Around 2:00 p.m., all the BYCers there met for the last time as part of the rally and had a group picture taken at the observation point.

#### **Huntington, Ind.**

In Huntington, Ind., a special program was undertaken in which each of the BYCers adopted grand-

parents. The youth are developing plans to do special activities with their adopted grandparents throughout the year. Each BYCer wrote a note to his or her "grandparent" and signed the note, "Secret Pal." They will not identify themselves to their "grandparents" until year end.

In October, the Huntington BYC had an annual chili supper raising money to help some youth attend a retreat at Shipshewana. The Huntington BYC is active — 16 members contributed to winning the Southern District banner at the October 9 Indiana Rally. The youth group earned the required 95 points.



*Above, BYCers who attended the Indiana BYC Fall Rally. At left, a few of the youth at the rally try to get some rest.*



#### **Ashland Park Street**

On January 15, 1989, the Park Street Brethren Church youth had their first activity of the new year: a spur-of-the-moment lock-in for both junior and senior high youth. About 35 kids enjoyed the fun, activities, and food of the evening. BYC advisors Brett and Barbie Martin provided the "babysitting" for the special lock-in activity.

For the first fund-raiser of the year, the PSB youth held a Super Bowl Sub Sale. Over 140 subs were



ordered, then prepared on Super Bowl Sunday. The youth made about \$200 on the venture, destined for the national project.

### Highland, Pa.

News of activities from the Highland Brethren Church in Pennsylvania: that BYC group began their year by having a community clean-up on Highland Ridge. They collected seven bags of trash and aluminum cans, with the proceeds going to district and national projects. A bowling party on October 28 included a special stop at Washington Hospital to call on a church member.

The Highland BYC also hosted the Pennsylvania District Fall Rally as a part of their commitment to the district program. During the rally there were two concerts, one by Highlanders. The rally activities also included several speakers, a puppet team, and a clown ministry team that performed for the rally participants.

### Southwest District

In the Southwest District (Tucson) Monday nights are a special time for Brethren youth — it's Bible study time. The Bible study for Tucson area Brethren youth is a time when they can share the stress of the week with fellow Christians. Kimberly Wilkins reports that the Bible studies are a time to laugh, pray, and learn together, while enjoying the discussion and idea-sharing of other BYCers. This sort of experience helps the BYCers realize that a lot of the same things are happening to their friends at school, at work, or at home. They are able to give advice and pray for one another. Subjects of the Bible studies in the past have included James (the importance of having faith), Philipians (all about joy), and I Peter (showing that the BYCers are called for a purpose).

In addition to the Bible studies, the Arizona youth are also experienced at having a good time. Arizona Brethren Youth brought



*Approximately 60 youth attended the Pennsylvania District Fall BYC Rally, which was hosted by the Highland Brethren Church of Marianna, Pa.*

in the New Year together at their fifth annual New Year's Eve party. An evening of festivities started at a local bowling alley with lots of pizza. After the bowling, the youth gathered at the church for more food and games, and decorations put up by Kimberly Wilkins and Kim Marie Smith.

Later that night, things quieted down as the group listened to devotions brought by Lynn Brown. Her thoughts really touched the hearts of the BYCers, when they were confronted with such questions as, "If you could give this year a name, what would it be?" and "What would you like to call this coming year?" In all, the evening was spent in a special way, as the youth brought in the New Year with God and fellow Christians.

### St. James, Md.

Back east, from St. James, Maryland, a report comes in that their BYC meets every Sunday night from 6-7:30 p.m. The first outing of the year, on September 18, was a miniature golf and pizza event.

On October 30, the St. James BYC gathered at the home of Larry and Debbie Violet for a Halloween party. The Violets' modernized log cabin decorated with fake cobwebs and numerous candles created an eerie yet appropriate setting for the gathering. Odd games, such as

"mummify a person with toilet paper" and "make costumes out of newspaper," provided entertainment for the evening.

For fund-raisers the St. James BYC sold Wolfgang Candy, the proceeds of which are being used to support a Filipino child through Compassions International. The St. James BYC also decided to send \$500 to the Crusaders last year.

### Derby, Kans.

The Derby, Kansas, BYC hosted the Midwest District BYC Conference. It was a big success with 25 youth attending. Most were from Derby and Mulvane, but for the first time, Cheyenne, Wyoming — over 800 miles away — was also represented. And the best part of the 1988 Midwest District Conference: participants played Bible charades, sang, had Bible devotions, and enjoyed fun and games and good Christian fellowship. During 1989, the Derby BYC will be traveling to Falls City, Nebraska, for the district BYC Conference.

### New Lebanon, Ohio

The New Lebanon Brethren Youth went right to work after the '88 General Conference. They sold popcorn, pop, and candy for an "outdoor" movie night. On August 26 at 9:00 p.m., cars and trucks

drove into the parking lot carrying young and old who had come to see the movie, *Winnie the Pooh*, which the youth felt was suitable for the whole family. The children weren't the only ones who enjoyed this movie. Many of the adults were on the edge of their seats during the Tiger song.

The second feature that evening sounded a more serious note; it was a Billy Graham film entitled *For Pete's Sake*. In addition to members of the New Lebanon Brethren Church who attended the films, there was a good turnout from the surrounding community.

### Bethlehem, Va.

At the Bethlehem Brethren Church in Harrisonburg, Virginia, the BYC group has been very busy. Seven of their ten members attended the Southeast District Conference, and nine attended the fall rally. The Bethlehem group participated in a fund-raiser for an area adult day care center and came in second place for the most money raised.

The Bethlehem BYC has also taken up the challenge from the National BYC officers to raise more money on a penny drive than anybody else. At Bethlehem the contest has taken on an added dimension, for the teen class has challenged two younger classes to

see who can raise the most money.

Other activities included a Super Bowl Sunday chili dinner, skating in early spring, and the responsibility of co-hosting the spring district conference with the Mt. Olive Brethren Church.

In all these examples, young men and women in The Brethren Church are finding ways to express their faith and their commitment to God. And they are also expressing their commitment to one another by enjoying the company and fellowship of Christians like themselves. It is all part of the BYC.

We can see, however, that there is a wide range of activities and of ideas about what should be happening in BYC. That's part of the joy of being Moderator of National BYC. I can see that it all fits together so nicely to create a strong youth ministry in The Brethren Church.

### BYC Convention

As Moderator, I'm trying to encourage Brethren Youth to continue this mindset of serving and working together. Our 1989 Conference theme is "Shine On! You are the Light of the World!" based upon the passage in Matthew that urges us to put our light on a hill. We are stressing the importance of service and are urging youth

groups to shine in this manner.

So what does BYC mean to me? It means serving my God in a way that is particularly meaningful to me, in concert with young men and women throughout the denomination. It gives me a warm, secure feeling knowing that I am working along side other Brethren youth, if not physically, certainly in spirit and in mind. This is an important asset of being a Christian. It is an important asset of being Brethren. And it is a thrilling part of being a member of the National BYC. [†]



Matthew 5:14-16  
National BYC Convention  
August 7-11, 1989  
North Manchester, Indiana

"SHINE ON! You are the Light of the World!" What an exciting theme for the 1989 BYC year!

And the 1989 BYC Convention promises to be just as exciting!

The BYC Convention will be held on the Manchester College campus in North Manchester, Indiana, August 7-11 in conjunction with the adult General Conference.

Highlights of the week: the BYC kick-off featuring the BYC Moderator's address on Monday evening; a concert on Tuesday evening featuring Christian singer Ray Boltz; Wednesday brings an afternoon of recreation and swimming at Quaker Haven while the evening brings the 1989 Crusader Review and the BYC Coffeehouse, highlighted by the Moderator's Cup presentation; Communion, the spiritual highlight of the week, is planned for Thursday, and the Farewell Fellowship on Friday concludes the week.

The Convention will also feature Bible activities, workshops, youth morning worship services, business sessions, evening worship services with the adults (with a session being planned by adults and youth), and lots of fellowship with old and new friends.

Debra S. Ritchey  
Administrative Assistant  
Board of Christian Education



BYCers enjoyed roller skating at the 1988 BYC Convention. A variety of activities are planned for this year's Convention, which for the first time ever will be held on the Manchester College campus in North Manchester, Ind.





# NAE Convention Focuses on the Church's Need for Revival

"Revive Your Church, O Lord!" was the constantly reiterated theme of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) convention held March 7-9 in Columbus, Ohio.

Brethren elder Dr. Juan Carlos Miranda, program coordinator for the convention, put the theme in perspective in a message to the NAE Board of Administration on the eve of the convention's opening. "Revival must be more than a convention theme," Miranda said. "It must be a cry from our heart." (See pages 4-6 for Dr. Miranda's message.)

## Main convention speakers

Tuesday evening plenary speaker Dr. Paul A. Cedar emphasized the need for the church to be reminded of its priorities. The church must once again acknowledge in word and deed that Jesus Christ is the only Lord of the church, he said. He urged pastors to equip and deploy laity for the work of the ministry and to mobilize the church for the task of world evangelization. "Nothing is more important than a grass-roots prayer movement that permeates the church," he said.

Biblical keynote speaker Dr. David Mains recognized that some Christians have a negative attitude toward revival because they misunderstand what revival is, associating it with emotional excesses and hellfire and damnation preaching. But true revival, Mains said, is basically an overwhelming sense of the Lord's presence. He suggested that if Christians understood revival in this way, they would welcome it. He said that a church prepares for revival in much the same way it would prepare if it knew that Christ was going to make a personal, physical visit to that congregation.

NAE President John H. White, in his presidential address, called for a twin strategy of revival and prayer by evangelicals as they seek to express their unity in Jesus Christ visibly before the world. To maintain and enhance our unity, White said, we need to recapture our theological roots (a radical commitment to biblical authority); stress our breadth and openness; emphasize mutual service and accountability; more aggressively promote local organizations of evangelicals; and teach Americans about the

worldwide evangelical community (of which most Americans are woefully ignorant).

"If evangelicals desire revival, their message, method, and moral life must be pure," David A. Seamands told convention attendees during the Wednesday evening plenary session. Seamands insisted that evangelicals must preach a gospel of changed lives rather than "cheap grace." We must emphasize the sanctifying grace of God as well as the justifying grace of God, he said. In speaking of moral purity, Seamands touched on the recent moral failure of certain prominent televangelists and the secular world's mockery of the church that resulted. He saw in this mockery a kind of backhand compliment. "What I believe they are saying to Christians is, 'We expected better things from you.' Their anger is in direct proportion to their disillusion with us."

Dr. Oswald Hoffman, speaker for the concluding banquet of the convention, encouraged his hearers with the reminder that "God is in our history, not just as a vague life force, but as a redeeming and life-giving power. God is in our humanity, such as it is, in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ. In Christ, God is in the world to stay. This is true, and it will always be true."

## Position paper and resolutions

In addition to the emphasis on revival in the various addresses of the convention, revival was at the heart of a position paper adopted by convention delegates, in which they resolved that "in this last decade of the twentieth century, we will address the challenge for a revived church." (See the following page for the complete text of this position paper.)

Convention delegates, recognizing their responsibility to speak out on specific social issues of our day, adopted resolutions on alcohol abuse, child care, ministry to the disabled, and persecuted Christians in the USSR. (One of these resolutions appears on the following page, and the remaining three will be included in next month's EVANGELIST.)

Another social issue was the subject of an open forum held the final day of the convention. In this session on "The

AIDS Epidemic and Your Local Church," Love & Action founder Jeffrey A. Collins and Lon Solomon, pastor of the McLean, Va., Bible Church, challenged conventiongoers to reach out with compassion to those afflicted with AIDS.

Collins exhorted churches "to behave as Jesus would behave in the midst of this worldwide holocaust. In the midst of all the heartache, rejection and anger of the AIDS epidemic, the church will find a truly historic opportunity for Christian witness and ministry." Solomon maintained that churches have a "glorious opportunity" to be on the cutting edge of ministering to AIDS victims. Of all people, Christians should be the most prepared and willing to genuinely love, accept, and care for AIDS victims, he said.

## Special awards

Several awards were made at the convention. The NAE Layperson of the Year Award, presented annually, was awarded to Congressman Tony P. Hall, sixth term member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Ohio's Third District (Dayton). Hall was honored for his advocacy on behalf of persecuted Christians, his commitment to the cause of alleviating world hunger, and his testimony to the dignity of the individual and to God-given human rights.

World Relief's Helping Hands Awards were presented to Dr. Mark Buntain of Calcutta, India, and to Bruce and Judy Millard of St. Louis Park, Minn. Dr. Buntain and his wife, Huldah, have served for 35 years as Assemblies of God missionaries among the poor in Calcutta. The Millards have worked with Cambodian refugees since 1982 and sponsored several refugee families.

Besides the addresses delivered at the full sessions of the convention, several well-known speakers brought messages to smaller groups at luncheons during the three days. In addition, dozens of workshops were held on a wide variety of topics.

Several Brethren pastors attended the convention, as well as a number of people from the Brethren National Offices and Ashland Theological Seminary, including the seminary choir.

# Revive Your Church, O Lord!

*The following position paper on revival, adopted by delegates to the 1989 National Association of Evangelicals convention, is worthy of careful study by Brethren churches and individuals.*

The Church that is faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ is grounded in the truth of God's Word, the Bible. To stay on course, the Church must hold firmly to that truth and proclaim how the eternal Word of God applies to the issues of the day. History shows that when the Church fails to do this, it retreats to a rehearsal of the past and loses its cutting edge for the present. A revived Church is a Church with a biblical message and a world-changing ministry for the needs of its day.

The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), therefore, resolves that in this last decade of the twentieth century, we will address the challenge for a revived Church.

We believe that God revives His Church through preaching, study and obedience to the Word. The Word is eternally relevant. It has a message for every generation. It shows lost men and women how God speaks truth and life into the problems we face in these days. God has an answer for war, racism, injustice, drug and alcohol abuse, crime, hatred and violence, immorality, broken families, abortion, materialism and every other sin. We resolve to proclaim the Word needed for these contemporary problems.

We believe that God revives His Church through prayer. The Church advances on its knees. In a nation of exceptional "busyness," we resolve that prayer will be a priority and that the many demands of a chaotic world will not deter us from making prayers and supplications for those in authority, believers and unbelievers, for the needy and for the troubled of our world.

We believe that God revives His Church through repentance. The bedrock of our faith is the truth that God turns people around. We believe that a broken and contrite spirit, confession of sin, and the renouncing of unrighteousness are essential to a godly life. A revived Church is one in which people turn from their wicked ways. We resolve that repentance will characterize the ministry and the life of our churches in these days.

We believe that God revives His Church through holy living. Holiness is the ongoing demonstration of God's

nature in the lives of believers. We oppose the extremes of legalism on the one hand and libertarianism on the other hand. We do seek a manner of life that is a manifestation of the character and the mind of Christ.

We believe that God revives His Church through a renewed vision of His greatness and glory. Focusing on today's problems can discourage us and dim our vision. We proclaim, however, that until Jesus returns, men and women will continue to be saved, churches will be built and the needs of our generation will be met by the power of God. Although we are not naive about the challenges of our day, we express with confidence our firm conviction that Jesus is the answer to

the problems of this world.

We believe that as God revives His Church, this new life will be demonstrated through evangelism. Spreading the good news at home and abroad is an essential part of the ongoing mission of the Church. All across America, people are seeking spiritual reality. This can be seen in the fact that religions quite foreign to this country have found fertile soil in the hearts of people who have grown bored or jaded in this prosperous land. These foreign ideologies, however, have provided no satisfaction for the spiritual longings of the human heart. We determine to take the gospel to our generation by every possible means.

We further believe that as God revives His Church, this new life will be demonstrated by the salt and light of the gospel penetrating and transforming all areas of life to the glory of God.

Revive Your Church, O Lord, we pray!

## **NAE Resolution**

### Child Care and the Federal Government

*The following is a resolution adopted by delegates at the recent NAE convention. Various child-care bills are now under consideration by committees of the U.S. Congress.*

"Children are an inheritance from the Lord," says the Psalmist. They are a precious gift from God. Parents' concern for children should come ahead of career success, personal satisfaction, or their own personal desires.

Contemporary America unfortunately tends to forget that children are a trust from the Lord. Numerous new problems have emerged, including a new wave of selfish materialism. Child abuse and neglect are increasing. Households headed by single parents are faced with added stress. Children are often used as pawns in custody battles. Social trends and economic needs require millions of mothers to enter the work force resulting in their children being reared by care-providers rather than by loving and responsible parents.

Christians understand that children need a close, loving and sustained relationship with their parents. The best providers of child care are loving parents for whom the care of their children in the home is the most important career. Nonetheless, child care outside the home has become a way of life for many American families. As a result, pressure is growing for the federal government and other governmental agencies to support institutionalized child-care services for

working mothers. However, we see a serious problem. Governmental involvement in the field of child care has the potential to undermine the nurturing of children while appearing to solve the child-care problem.

Believing that parents have the prime, God-given responsibility for child care, the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) calls upon the Christian community to support those governmental measures that embody the following principles:

1. The federal government and other governmental agencies should leave to parents the choice of how to care for their children — to care for them at home, to entrust them to family or friends, or make any other arrangements they believe appropriate. Parents, not government, should decide what is best for their children.

2. The federal government and other governmental agencies should concentrate any child-care assistance in the form of tax credits to lower-income families with younger children, not grants to providers of child-care services. Tax credits should not discriminate against women who choose to work in the home.

3. The federal government and other governmental agencies should not establish credentials or guidelines for the provision of child care that would favor secularized child care. Parents who believe in religiously-oriented care for their children should not suffer discrimination.





## Seminary Profiles

By Bradley Weidenhamer

*This is the first in a series of occasional articles introducing Brethren Ashland Theological Seminary students to readers of the EVANGELIST. They are being written by Rev. Brad Weidenhamer, an ordained Brethren elder who serves as the seminary librarian.*

**G**OD'S CALL to full-time Christian service sometimes comes when one least expects it. That was the experience of Ken Ingold, a first-year student at Ashland Theological Seminary.

Following graduation from Goshen, Indiana, High School in 1977, Ken joined the family business, a title insurance company, as the office manager. He expected to make a career in the business, someday taking over as president.

One Sunday morning, however, while discussing a solo he was to sing that morning during the worship service, Ken was challenged by his pastor, Rev. Jack Oxenrider, to consider whether God might be calling him to full-time Christian ministry. As so often happens, at the same time others in the Jefferson Brethren congregation, which Ken attended, were led by God to ask him the same question.

Ken came to the conclusion that God really was calling him to full-time Christian service, so he entered Indiana University at South Bend, from



Ken Ingold

which he received his degree in 1988.

During their years in the Jefferson congregation, Ken and his wife, Pam, served for nine years as sponsors of the senior high youth. Ken also served as church treasurer, chairman of the Social Concerns Ministry, and as a member of the Board of Administrators. He also currently serves on the General Conference Peace Committee.

In August 1988 Ken and his family moved to Ashland. Pam is employed full-time as an assistant office manager at WILL Research, where she also does word processing. Ken spends some of his hours working at a local pharmacy and as assistant to the

youth director at a church in Mansfield. They have two children, Steven who is 4 and Brittany who is 2.

Of his brief seminary experience, Ken says, "I have enjoyed Ashland Theological Seminary and the relationships I have made here."

This young man has a burden for the pastoral ministry and also feels a real concern for work with young people. Ken and Pam look forward to giving their lives in serving the Brethren fellowship.

### Readers' Forum

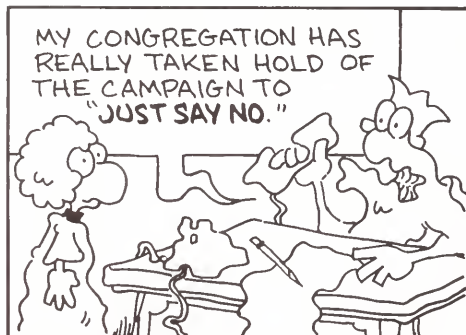
#### *A Smile, a Hug, and a Hand*

*Sometimes all that is needed  
Is a smile, a hug, and a hand;  
For those less fortunate than we are,  
To help them understand.  
A smile will cost us nothing,  
A hug can cheer them up.  
A hand to help the weaker ones  
Can help to fill their cup.  
A smile to show we love them,  
And encouragement through a hug.  
A hand to help with some task  
For that heavy load they tug.  
But we must never stop here;  
We need to help in other ways —  
To provide for physical needs,  
And help teach from day to day.  
If we would reap the harvest,  
We must extend our money and self.  
If our Father has given us blessings,  
We must share with others our wealth.  
All that the oppressed may be needing,  
Is a smile, a hug, and a hand,  
A word of encouragement to lift them  
Until on their own they can stand.  
Sometimes all that is needed  
Is a smile, a hug, and a hand;  
For those less fortunate than we are,  
To help them understand.*

RUTH DELOZIER  
Ashland, Ohio

According to the author, she wrote this poem after she read an article with the same title by David Benschoff in the April EVANGELIST.

### Pontius' Puddle



### Winding Waters Church Welcomes Two Additions to Pastoral Staff

**Elkhart, Ind.** — The Winding Waters Brethren Church recently welcomed Brad Hardesty and Phil Stump to the pastoral staff of the congregation, to serve along with Senior Pastor Rev. Leroy Solomon.

Rev. Hardesty is serving the Winding Waters congregation as Pastor of Discipleship, which entails helping members of the congregation become more like Christ. His specific responsibilities include leadership training, working with the educational ministries of the church, and coordinating the youth ministries.

Rev. Hardesty is a native of Nappanee, Ind., a graduate of Ball State University (B.S., 1980), and a graduate of Ashland Theological Seminary (M.Div., 1985). Before coming to Winding Waters, he served the Milledgeville, Ill., Brethren Church for three years. He and his wife, Jan (also from Nappanee), have two children.

Mr. Stump is serving the Winding Waters Church as Pastor of Evangelism. He plans and implements evangelistic programs and services within the church and community, coordinates visitation, and maintains a regular publicity program to build

community awareness. He is currently in the process of developing a Bereavement outreach, a Health and Wellness outreach, and a visitation program.

Pastor Stump was born in Goshen, Ind., where he attended the Goshen First Brethren Church. He and his

wife, Delores Stoffer, whom he married in May 1967, attended the Jefferson Brethren Church for a time, then transferred their membership to the Winding Waters Church in 1978. Phil is a graduate of Goshen High School and attended Ashland College one year. He served in law enforcement for almost 25 years, nearly 23 of those on the Elkhart Police Department.

— reported by Carol M. Pawlak,  
church secretary



*Pastors Brad Hardesty (l.) and Phil Stump.*

### Gary Cotter Named Executive Director Of Indiana District Brethren Retreat

**Shipshewana, Ind.** — Gary Cotter has become the new executive director of The Brethren Retreat at Shipshewana, Ind.

Mr. Cotter, his wife Molly, and their two children, Wendy (6) and Kurt (5),

arrived at the Retreat on March 14.

Mr. Cotter has been involved in the camping ministry for approximately 20 years. He came to The Brethren Retreat from Camp Peniel near Marble Falls, Texas, where he served as

program coordinator for the last three years. He has a B.S. degree from Dallas Bible College, where he majored in Bible and Christian education and minored in camping. He has been a member of Christian Camping International for 14 years.

He has been affiliated with the Independent Bible Church and has served local congregations in various capacities — as board member, treasurer, director of children's church, and "missionary" (to a camp).

Mrs. Cotter works with her husband in the camping ministry. Her specialty is crafts.

A number of Indiana Brethren had an opportunity to meet the Cotters at a Friends of the Camp Banquet held Saturday, April 15.

By the year 2000, the majority of the world's population will live in massive urban centers. The number of cities with a population of one million people or more has tripled during the past 25 years.

— Source Lausanne Com. for World Evan.



*New Shipshewana Brethren Retreat Executive Director Gary Cotter with wife, Molly, and children Kurt and Wendy.*

Photo by Rev. Larry Baker.



# ATS Honors Rev. William Kerner As Outstanding Alumnus of 1989

Ashland, Ohio — Rev. William Kerner was honored as Ashland Theological Seminary's Outstanding Alumnus of the Year April 5 at the seminary's annual Alumni/Senior Banquet.

Rev. Kerner was given this honor in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the work and life of Christian ministry.

Kerner entered Ashland Theological Seminary (ATS) in 1968 in the midst of a successful career in business. Although he was 50 years of age at the time, he was full of energy and enthusiasm.

Following graduation from seminary in 1971, he was ordained a Brethren elder and became pastor of the Roann, Ind., First Brethren Church, which he served for 7½ years. He then accepted the challenge of pastoring the Meadow Crest Brethren Church, a Home Mission congregation in Ft. Wayne, Ind. Though only there 1½ years, he provided excellent leadership and left the church with a secure foundation.

In 1980 he accepted a call to the newly created position of Director of Pastoral Ministries (DPM) for The Brethren Church. As DPM he again demonstrated his leadership ability, as he worked through the details of



*Rev. Bill Kerner and wife, Trudy.*

this new position. His responsibilities included matching pastors with congregations, working through problems between pastors and congregations, interviewing candidates for ordination, and working with local congregations across the denomination.

Rev. Kerner retired from this position in 1987, but took a part-time

position with the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church as Supervisor of Home Missions. He has served in this position for two years, and plans to retire in June.

According to Dr. Fred Finks, vice-president of ATS, "Bill is indeed an outstanding representative of Ashland Theological Seminary, and the Seminary is especially pleased to recognize him as its 1989 Outstanding Alumnus."

## Tour of Brethren Missions Planned for February 1990

Russiaville, Ind. — A tour of Brethren mission work in Colombia and Argentina, South America, is being planned for February 1990.

Tour members will fly first to Bogotá, Colombia, to visit the Brethren work there, then fly on to Buenos Aires, Argentina, where visits will be made to Rosario, Soldini, Cordoba, and possibly the new mission work at Bell Ville. The tour group will also visit Eden Camp for the Spiritual Conference of the Argentine Brethren.

Tentative dates for the tour are February 9 to March 2, 1990. Cost per person from Miami, Fla., will be approximately \$1,785, which includes travel, lodging, and food.

Anyone interested in more information about the tour should contact Jim Payne, Rt. 3, Box 61, Russiaville, IN 46979 (phone 317-883-7149).

## Ashland College Choir to Take Annual Spring Tour May 15-26

Ashland, Ohio — The annual spring tour of the Ashland College Choir, scheduled for May 15-26, will take the choir to Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Washington, D.C., New York, and Massachusetts.

The choir will sing in the Saint James, Md., Brethren Church during the tour and at several non-Brethren churches in areas near to Brethren congregations. The concert at the Saint James Brethren Church will be presented on Friday evening, May 19, beginning at 7:00 o'clock.

Concerts will also be presented May 16 at Christ United Methodist Church in Bethel Park, Pa. (7:00 p.m.); May 17 at Union Bridge Church of the Brethren, Union Bridge, Md. (7:30 p.m.); and May 18 at St. George's United Methodist Church in Fairfax, Va. (8:00 p.m.); as well as in New York and Massachusetts.

The AC choir also presented a pre-tour mini-concert during the April 16 morning worship service of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church.

Of the 40 members of the choir going on tour, seven are Brethren: Glenn Black (Park Street), Joe Gilmer (Park Street), Ryan Gordon (Bradenton), Keri Kurlinski (Canton Trinity), Vanessa Oburn (Pleasant Hill), Chris Sullivan (Milledgeville), and Kim Wagoner (Elkhart).

## NAE Representative Opposes Child-Care Bills in Congress

Carol Stream, Ill. — A representative of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) testified April 19 before the Finance Committee of the U.S. Senate on various child-care bills under consideration.

In testimony before the committee, Robert P. Dugan, Jr., director of NAE's Office of Public Affairs in Washington, D.C., said NAE's 1989

convention resolution on child care implies "opposition to the Act for Better Child Care Services (ABC) and its variants, and support for a tax credit approach unholding parental choice." (See page 17 for the resolution).

NAE's position is that parents who believe in religiously oriented care for their children should not suffer discrimination. The ABC approach would seem to produce this kind of discrimination.

The NAE testimony affirmed that a simple tax credit approach to child care is preferable because it "does not deny benefits to parents who out of conviction choose religious day care . . . does not restrict parental choice of child care . . . and does not provide benefits for two-income families while denying them to parents who sacrifice to care for their children at home."

Other religious organizations testifying before the committee were the U.S. Catholic Conference and the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

# More Than 4,000 Leaders Expected At World Evangelization Congress

**Manila, The Philippines** — More than 4,000 Christian leaders from 190 countries are expected to participate in the second International Congress on World Evangelization, which could set the pace for the advance of Christianity for the rest of the century.

Lausanne II in Manila, scheduled for July 11-20, 1989, is expected to attract the widest range of Christian leaders ever assembled for an international conference. If participants from all 190 countries attend, it will be the largest number of countries represented in any world religious gathering in history, according to congress planners.

While the ten-day conference is designed to emphasize world evangelism, leaders will also discuss strategy for confronting world social problems, according to Leighton Ford, Chairman of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, which is sponsoring the congress.

Congress participants will grapple with such issues as the church's role in dealing with poverty, racism and apartheid, social injustice and inequity, overpopulation, urbanization, modernization, communication, the role of women and the laity in evangelism, the challenge of other religions, and cooperation in evangelism.

Evangelist Billy Graham, whose organization sponsored the first International Congress on World Evangelization in Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1974, will deliver the opening address. Graham is honorary chairman of the congress.

Graham said the Lausanne movement, which organized following the first Lausanne Congress in 1974, is on the "cutting edge of mission strategy, helping to mobilize, motivate and multiply worldwide evangelistic efforts."

Leighton Ford, a Canadian-born evangelist who directs Leighton Ford Ministries in Charlotte, North Carolina, will deliver the closing congress address on July 20. Ford, chairman of the Congress Steering Committee, will challenge participants to intensify world evangelism efforts during the last decade of this century.

White and black evangelists from South Africa, Michael Cassidy and Ceasar Molebatsi, will speak during plenary sessions on cross-cultural ministries and social concern as a part of evangelism. Cassidy is executive

director of African Enterprise in Natal, South Africa. Molebatsi is director of Youth Alive in Soweto, South Africa.

Gen. Eva Burrows of London, Australian-born head of the Salvation Army, will also address the congress. Bible studies will be led by John R. W. Stott, rector emeritus of All Souls Church in London and chairman of the drafting committee which wrote the Lausanne Covenant, the statement issued at the 1974 congress which provides the theological basis for cooperation in the Lausanne movement.

A major emphasis, according to Ford, will focus on helping Christian churches carry out the "Great Commission of Jesus Christ" to share the Christian faith with every person in the world, including the unreached people and those who live in countries or societies where Christians are in the minority.

About 100 congress participants have been invited from the Soviet Union, where glasnost and perestroika are presenting Christians with unparalleled opportunities. Congress planners expect the largest and broadest representation from Eastern European churches ever to attend an international religious congress.

About 300 Christians from China are expected to attend, including representatives of Chinese "house

churches," along with leaders of the "Three-Self churches."

In addition to almost 350 workshops dealing with issues facing world Christians, the program will also provide opportunities for "affinity groups" working in similar fields of evangelism to share what is (and is not) working. The goal of these affinity groups, according to Congress Program Director Ed Dayton of Monrovia, California, is to provide an opportunity to form worldwide networks of Christians concerned about common problems for continued contact after the Congress ends.

Dayton, founder and director of Missions Advanced Research and Communication Centre (MARC), said the formation of networks that provide for on-going communication may be the single most important outcome of the congress.

The Congress may also provide a network for cooperation among Christian leaders of organizations which have developed more than 400 plans for world evangelism, most of them scheduled for culmination at the end of this century in AD 2000. Thomas Wang, International Director of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, will address the congress on AD 2000 evangelization plans.

Wang, who will retire after the congress, said Lausanne II in Manila could be the most significant gathering of world Christian leaders in this century as strategies for world evangelization unfold for the last decade of the 1900s.

## "Scripture Languages" Grow By Twenty-Three in 1988

**New York, N.Y.** — "Scripture languages," those languages in which at least one book of the Bible has been published, increased by 23 in 1988, bringing the total to 1,907, according to the American Bible Society.

The entire Bible was published for the first time in seven languages last year. Of these seven languages, five are spoken in Africa, one in Peru, South America, and one in Sumatra.

Thirty-three New Testaments were also reported for the first time in 1988. About half of these were in languages indigenous to Mexico, Central, and South America. Six others are languages spoken in Papua, New Guinea, a relatively small Pacific island nation in which hundreds of languages are spoken.

In North America, a New Testament was published for the first time in Plautdietsch, the "low German" spoken in parts of southern Canada as well as in the United States and South America. Another was published in the Cree Indian dialect of Northern Saskatchewan.

According to the American Bible Society, the complete Bible has now been published in 310 languages of the world, the New Testament has been published in an additional 695 languages, and at least one book is available in 902 other languages, bringing the total to 1,907.

"What is so gratifying about a report like this," commented Dr. Boyd L. Daniels, American Bible Society librarian, "is that it makes clear that Scriptures are being made available to more and more men and women around the world in their own language each year."



## From The



## Grape Vine

The **Smithville, Ohio, Brethren Church** has voluntarily taken on the task of caring for Camp Bethany, the Ohio District camp, this year. This includes cleaning, repairing, painting, fixing up, weeding, mowing, and a lot more. According to Pastor Jim Rowsey, approximately 30 to 35 people have already helped with the work — and the mowing season has just begun. Most of the work is done on Mondays or Thursdays, but it also overflows into other days of the week. Other Ohio Brethren will get an opportunity to lend them a hand when a district work day is held at the camp on May 13.

The **Warsaw, Ind., First Brethren Church** had an attendance of 274 on Easter Sunday in March. This is 32 more than attended on Easter last year, and the highest Sunday worship attendance in at least the last fifteen years.

The **Nappanee, Ind., First Brethren Church** has experienced a "decided boost in morale, attitudes, par-

ticipation, and most of all in attendance" since the congregation moved into its new building January 1. Morning worship attendance for January, February, and March averaged 215, compared with 182 for the same period last year. Sunday school attendance was also up, averaging 148 for the three months compared with 139 for the first three months of 1988.

The **Cameron, W. Va., First Brethren Church** established two new services recently — a midweek prayer time and a men's fellowship breakfast that meets once a month. Both services are going well, according to Pastor Ralph John.

The **Quiet Dell Brethren Church** located near Cameron, W. Va., has shown new life, with attendance tripling during the past year (from 5 to 15). Pastor Ralph John reports that monthly hymn sings held by the congregation during the spring are well attended by several other churches in the community.

**Joni Eareckson Tada**, renowned Christian artist and author, who became paralyzed in a diving accident over 20 years ago, has been named Honorary Chairperson of the Sino-American Higher Educational Center for Special Education in Jiangxi, China. The new Center will provide educational, vocational, and employment opportunities for disabled people in the Jiangxi Province.

**Evangelist Billy Graham** has announced that he has accepted an invi-

tation to preach in Hungary's largest outdoor sports stadium. This is the first time permission has been granted for such an event in an outdoor stadium anywhere in Eastern Europe. The meeting, to be held in Budapest on July 29, 1989, is expected to draw people from all parts of Hungary as well as from other Eastern and Western European countries.

**Eternity magazine**, a monthly evangelical magazine begun 38 years ago by Dr. Donald Gray Barnhouse, printed its last issue in January. Lack of interest and financial problems were the reasons for its folding. The magazine had 29,000 subscribers at the time of its demise, and this was not a large enough base from which to operate successfully.

Senior Citizens at the **St. James, Md., Brethren Church** were honored Hawaiian style on March 5. They were greeted with a lei and a photo session, dined on Hawaiian and American food, and were taken on an imaginary tour of the Hawaiian Islands.

The **United Bible Societies** of the world distributed well over a half billion Scriptures in 1988. This was an 11 percent rise above 1987, making it the highest yearly total in the 43 year history of the UBS.

By the year 2000, according to the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, up to 83 percent of the world's unreached people will likely live in countries closed to traditional missionary activity.

## Christian Writers Conference To be Held July 7-9 in Kansas

**Benton, Kans.** — A conference for Christian writers will be held Friday, July 7, through Sunday, July 9, at Bethel College in North Newton, Kansas.

The keynote speaker for the conference, which is sponsored by Lamplighters Christian Writers, will be Sally Stuart, author of 11 books and more than 600 published articles. She will be joined by a number of other published Christian writers who will lead workshops on a variety of topics related to Christian writing.

For more information about the conference, registration fee, and meals and lodging costs, send a self-addressed, stamped (25¢), business size envelope to Lamplighters Christian Writers, Box 415, Benton, KS 67017-0415.

## In Memory

**Lloyd Benedict**, 73, April 2. Member for 35 years and trustee for many years of the Denver First Brethren Church. Services by Rev. George Hapner.

**Merritte Clayton**, 86, March 24. Friend of the Greta Brethren Church. Services by Pastor James F. Black.

**James E. Norris**, 83, March 22. Member for 44 years of the St. James Brethren Church, where he was deacon emeritus at the time of his death. Mr. Norris taught Sunday school classes many years and wrote the Laymen's program for THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST for 17 years. Services by Pastor Brian H. Moore.

**Oran Leedy**, 88, March 20. Member and deacon for 49 years of the Tiosa Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Don Peters.

**Marilyn Fisher**, 66, March 18. Member for 38 years of the Denver First Brethren Church. Services by Rev. George Brown.

**Lucy E. Ball**, 95, January 17. Member for more than 60 years of the Oakville First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Dan Lawson.

## Weddings

**Michelle Jackson** to **Jeffrey Morgan**, April 8, at the Flora First Brethren Church; Pastor Alvin Grumbling officiating. Bride a member of the Flora First Brethren Church.

## Goldenaires

**Fred D. and Alice Horn**, 50th, May 12. Members of the Ardmore First Brethren Church.

**David, Sr., and Roberta Sowers**, 50th, April 22. Members of the Pleasant View Brethren Church.

## Membership Growth

**Gretna**: 6 by baptism

**Quiet Dell**: 1 by baptism

**Flora**: 3 by baptism, 6 by transfer

**Garber**: 2 by baptism, 2 by transfer

**Cameron**: 6 by baptism, 5 by transfer

**Jefferson**: 1 by baptism, 5 by transfer

**Fairless Hills-Levittown**: 3 by baptism

**New Lebanon**: 1 by baptism, 2 by transfer

# Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).



## MOTHER'S DAY

Mother's Day is a special Sunday set aside each May (this year it's May 14) to honor our mothers. The Bible teaches that God watches over us the way a mother eagle watches over her eaglets (Deuteronomy 32:9-12). God gives mothers a special job — to take care of us, love us, and teach us about God. So take time today and give thanks to God for your special mom.

### Famous Mothers of the Bible

Use your Bible to find the verses listed below. Then draw a line from the Bible mother to her child (or children).

MARY (Luke 1:30-31)

MOSES, AARON, and MIRIAM

ELIZABETH (Luke 1:11-13)

ISAAC

HANNAH (I Samuel 1:20)

JACOB and ESAU

JOCHEBED (Exodus 6:20, 15:20)

SAMUEL

SARAH (Genesis 21:3)

JESUS

REBEKAH (Genesis 25:21-26)

JOHN THE BAPTIST

### Make a Coupon for Your Mom

Using the coupon below, give your mom something special for Mother's Day. (It could be doing the dishes, sweeping, helping to cook, or anything else that would be helpful.)

\*\*\*\*\*

#### A Mother's Day Coupon for My Mom

As a gift of love, I will \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

For the time period of \_\_\_\_\_.

If I forget, please remind me that I gave you this coupon so that I can fulfill my gift to you.

MUCH LOVE, \_\_\_\_\_.

\*\*\*\*\*

### An Important Commandment

Using the code at the bottom, fill in the blanks below to reveal an important commandment from the Bible about mothers.

8 14 13 14 15    22 14 18 15    6 1 17 8 5 15

M O T H E R,

1 13 4    12 14 17 8 5 15    17 8 1 17

22 14 18 15    4 1 22 16    12 1 22    2 5

11 14 13 7    9 13    17 8 5    11 1 13 4

20 8 9 3 8    17 8 5    11 14 15 4

22 14 18 15    7 14 4    7 9 19 5 16

( 20:12)

22 14 18    5 21 14 4 18 16

Code: 1-A 2-B 3-C 4-D 5-E 6-F 7-G  
8-H 9-I 10-K 11-L 12-M 13-N 14-O 15-R  
16-S 17-T 18-U 19-V 20-W 21-X 22-Y



# BRETHREN BOOKS AND TRACTS

Available from  
**The Brethren Publishing Company**

If you would like to know more about the history and doctrines of The Brethren Church, or if you want to share information about our church with others, the Brethren Publishing Company has several publications available to help you. Following is a price list with a brief description of each publication.

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**Meet the Brethren**, Donald F. Durnbaugh editor, 120 pp., \$2.95.

A chapter on Brethren history from 1708 to 1883 followed by chapters describing each of the five Brethren bodies (Church of the Brethren, Grace Brethren, The Brethren Church, Dunkard Brethren, Old German Baptist Brethren).

**History of The Brethren Church**, by Albert T. Ronk, 524 pp., \$5.00.

A thorough study of the background and history of the life, thought, and mission of The Brethren Church from its beginnings to 1968.

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A study of Brethren missions from the colonial period to recent years.

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A handbook describing the responsibilities of the various officers, boards, and committees of a local Brethren church.

**A Search for Truth**, by Albert T. Ronk, 175 pp., \$.75.

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**Christian Doctrine — Lectures and Sermons**, by J. Allen Miller, 346 pp., \$1.75.

A posthumous publication of lectures and sermons by this Brethren scholar and former president of Ashland College and dean of Ashland Theological Seminary.

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**The Brethren Pastor's Handbook**, 122 pp., \$3.00.

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## BOOKLETS

**A Centennial Statement**, 10 pp., \$1.00 each; \$.75 each for ten or more; \$.50 each for 100 or more.

A booklet published during The Brethren Church's centennial year that defines the beliefs and practices of the denomination.

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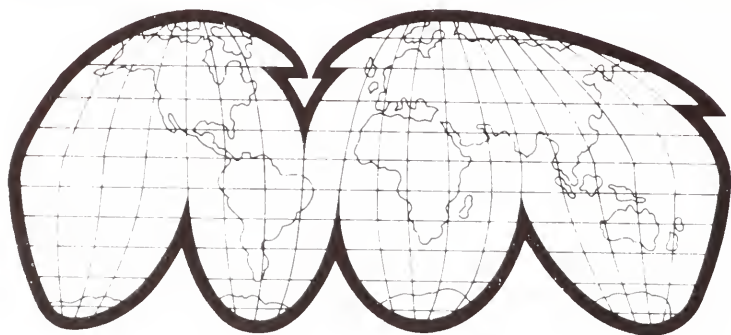
# THE BRETHREN **Evangelist**

JUNE 1989





# Developing a Global Vision



by  
**John  
Maust**

## Working Together

**A**S A SIXTH GRADER, I took my first big step into the world of work: sweeping up the Nappanee, Ind., movie theater twice a week.

A friend and I didn't get paid much, but the fringe benefits — at least for us 11-years-olds — were great. We got into the movies free, could eat all the stale, leftover popcorn, and draw a drink or two from the pop machine.

That last privilege really pleased us. I liked to pour Coke, Sprite, and Orange into the same paper cup — a drink we called "suicide."

Imagine our bliss at walking into a cool movie theater on a sultry summer day, grabbing a broom, then downing a tall, beaded cup of, yes, "suicide." Delicious! (Fortunately, the drink didn't live up to its name!)

### Pleasant mixtures

There are other mixtures like this — mixtures that don't necessarily sound good, but which prove quite pleasant once you actually try them.

Here's one example: evangelical Christians from various denominations working together. Now that's an idea that turns many of us off. It's not that Brethren have something against Presbyterians, or Baptists against Pentecostals. We just feel more comfortable serving Christ with people who worship God the way we do.

Or perhaps we shy away from interchurch cooperation because we think we'll be forced into a one-church structure or be required to give up our denominational distinctives.

Or maybe we think joint efforts are a waste of time. I belonged to a fast-growing Lima, Peru, church, which had much to share with the rest of the evangelical community. Yet the church would not get involved in the occasional city-wide evangelical activities because, in the words of its pastor, "We have too much of our own work to do, and we never seem to directly benefit."

Here in the U.S., perhaps our individualism creeps in. We don't feel particularly drawn to massive efforts where we can't see the direct impact of our contribution.

### Colombian pastors link up

Nonetheless, around the world we are seeing examples of Christians finding creative ways to work together in order to reach their communities for Christ.

In April I attended an interdenominational retreat for church leaders in Medellín, Colombia. The subject was evangelism and discipleship. Amazingly, 23 of the city's 30 denominations were represented — more than 160 church leaders in all. (One of those was Brethren Church pastor Dario Tobón.)

Afterwards, retreat organizers were ecstatic, especially so since their city has a history of entrenched denominationalism. Fabio Acevedo, head of the local ministerial association, said, "Before, there was an attitude of taking away what another church has gathered. For example, if I have a member in my church, there's going to be someone

in another church who's going to try to take him away."

But at the retreat, denominationalism took a back pew. Church leaders of various backgrounds joined to pray for their city and to study how to reach it for Christ. Only three in every 1,000 people are evangelical Christians in Medellín, or about one-third of one percent of the 3 million population. So church leaders recognized their need to pull together if they were going to make an impact.

The Medellín church leaders are not willing to sacrifice their own distinctives and programs, but they are willing to hold concurrent evangelistic training and outreach programs for a year's time.

Another example of Christians creatively working together began several years ago in Caracas, Venezuela, when pastors from six denominations formed a "Coalition." Their plan: help each other plant new congregations. They decided to do this by financing two full-time evangelists who would be assigned every six months to a different Coalition church to help that church start a daughter congregation.

Talk about a disparate group: the Coalition include Evangelical Mennonite, Brethren in Christ, Pentecostal, and Presbyterian churches. But so far, the Coalition effort has resulted in six new congregations. Many people have made first-time commitments to Christ.

### How delicious!

To be sure, the local church is the heart of Christian growth and nurture. But there's a time and place for Christians of all stripes to work together toward a common goal.

It just makes common (and Scriptural) sense. There is strength in numbers. Furthermore, united witness fits with Christ's teaching that the world will know we are Christians by our love for one another.

"How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!" said King David in Psalm 133:1 (NIV). In the Spanish Bible, that same verse translates, "How good and *delicious* it is . . ." That reminds me again of that crazy carbonated mixture. But believe me, the mixture of Christians working together is much more delicious! [†]

# THE BRETHREN Evangelist

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## Looking Toward Conference

General Conference is fast approaching and plans are being finalized for the first ever meeting of our Conference at Manchester College in North Manchester, Indiana. Included in this issue are two important Conference items. First, on page 10, information about the nominees for General Conference Executive Council. Read this information and pray that God will guide in this election. Second, the General Conference reservation form on page 14. If you are planning to attend Conference, study this carefully, since there are some important changes from past years due to the change in Conference location. (If you have questions, call the National Office — 419-289-1708 — and talk to Berniece Miller). Then complete your reservation and return it before July 21 (the sooner the better).

Next month's issue of the EVANGELIST will contain a detailed preview of the Conference program.

## Answers to Little Crusader Page:

**God, Our Heavenly Father:** F=Father; A=Near; T=Fortress; H=Help; E=Shepherd; R=Refuge.



# The Last Word

By O. Kenneth Walther

Paul replied: *Short time or long — I pray God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains.* Acts 26:29\*

THIS VERSE constitutes Paul's last recorded words spoken in Palestine. Here in his final hearing before Herod Agrippa II and Festus, Paul makes his last stand before being sent off to Rome. He addresses those in the audience hall of ancient Caesarea and his audience of readers today with a most intriguing climactic sentence: "Short time or long — I pray God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains."

As it stands, this final statement is a remarkable example of enthusiastic Christian zeal and genuine Christian courtesy. There is nothing abrasive, over-zealous, obnoxious, or repugnant here. Despite his unjust imprisonment for two long years at Caesarea, and surely after receiving some cruel physical as well as mental abuse from corrupt Felix, Paul finishes his final speech of self-defense with a personal invitation to Herod Agrippa and others present at the court appearance to soberly reflect on both his life and his words. One can only suspect that this earnest, yet tactful, plea made by the apostle induced Herod Agrippa to take yet a second look at the sincerity and commitment of the prisoner standing before him.

\*Quotations from the Bible are from the *New International Version*.

*Dr. Walther is dean of Ashland Theological Seminary and professor of Greek and New Testament. This article first appeared in the Ashland Theological Journal (Spring 1987) and is reprinted by permission of the seminary.*

Just as the audience with the king and the other nobles had begun with Paul lifting one manacled hand to gain their attention (Acts 26:1), we ought to picture Paul here raising the same hand at the conclusion of this imperial interview. The intriguing question is: Why does he here mention his chains, which earlier he had already displayed openly and which must have been obvious to everyone present? And what does Paul mean by the final phrase, "except for these chains?"

I shall try to provide three brief suggestions, offer a personal illustration, and give three key words on which to hang the three suggestions. Paul's chains are at once restrictive, redundant, and yet redemptive. The chains referred to by Paul must have a special significance. The Greek word *desmos*, meaning chain or bond, appears eighteen times in the New Testament. Thirteen of these eighteen appearances may be directly attributed to Paul. For Paul this is an undeniably crucial word.

## Restrictive Chains

Let us look at the first suggestion for the special significance of the words "chains" here in Paul's last recorded statement in Palestine. The words, "except for these chains," might mean, and here I am admittedly paraphrasing Paul: "Well, thank goodness these chains are not your lot, O King Agrippa, or yours either, Festus. For I am unable to move about, but you are!"

Read this way, Paul's last words may initially have surprised his hearers. For surely Paul recognized the apparent incongruity of appealing to King Agrippa and the others present to experience spiritual freedom — a real theological liberation, where there is neither Greek nor

Jew, slave nor free, male nor female — while he himself stood conspicuously in chains before them.

For Paul, chains were restrictive and limiting. Could it be that Paul would wish no hurdle or handicap to be placed in the king's path to keep him from joyously discovering for himself the experience of faith in the Lord of the universe — the Savior of mankind — Jesus Christ?

Do you remember that first flush of faith when you first believed? No one — nothing could distract you. You knew; you believed; you trusted; your faith-walk commenced at that very moment. Later there would be hurdles and hazards and handicaps. But there is no place for them when faith is first fresh and green and rooting. Could Paul be wishing for Agrippa a ripe opportunity to experience for himself such a fresh, personal discovery without distraction and diversion?

Chains are restrictive is surely what Paul is implying here. And he would wish no impediment to stand in the king's way, for Agrippa was already on the verge of making a decision based on Paul's long self-defense and personal appeal to him. In no way would he want Agrippa burdened with any weight or restricted by any barrier to outright discovery of the living Lord.

On the other hand, for Paul the limitations created by the chains caused him to reflect personally that no situation is every so hopeless, no individual is ever so helpless, no occasion is ever so filled with hurting that God cannot be present with the one who suffers and yet endures. In his great prison epistle — Philipians — Paul confided openly: "... for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know

what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength" (Phil. 4:11-13). Surely Paul became a living example of an individual equipped by God to overcome incredible obstacles. Undoubtedly the Roman court at Caesarea must have been impressed by the sheer courage and tenacity of this man in chains.

### Redundant Chains

I believe that there is another dimension to Paul's use of this concluding phrase, "except for these chains." I can hear Paul asserting that these chains are redundant, really unnecessary, even embarrassing, yet not without an ultimate purpose. Again, allow me to paraphrase Paul here. He could be saying: "I didn't really need these chains, for I've traveled and spoken openly and freely in a large part of the Roman Empire, but my period of internment here at Caesarea has caused me to experience some things I would not trade. Although these chains have pushed me beyond all reasonable levels of tolerance and endurance, what an experience this has been for me! Don't feel sorry for me, O Agrippa, or you, Festus, for these are *my* chains!"

In Philippians, Paul expressed his outright conviction of God's purpose in letting him experience the depths of imprisonment:

Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly. (Phil. 1:12-14)

Have you ever been confined in one place for two years? Or have you found yourself in a tight spot for an indefinite period of time? Only then can you possibly relate to Paul's situation.

How well I recalled the line of that great hymn, "Once to Every Man and Nation," which says, "New

occasions teach new duties," when one night in the summer of 1985 I boarded the night train from Johannesburg to Durban in South Africa. I had just begun the long trip cooped up in a train compartment with five other men. When it came time to sleep, our seats were adjusted so that three bunks were suspended on each side of the tiny compartment.

---

***"Paul was aware that his chains were part of that redemptive act of suffering and humiliation which took place in the sacrifice and death of Jesus Christ."***

---

There was barely enough room to crawl in, and I felt fortunate to have a lower bunk. I don't think I ever felt more cramped or confined in my life. I laid my head not on the pillow provided, but on the leather shoulder bag I'd been carrying with me for some six weeks in Africa. It was filled with several dozen pieces of priceless Palestinian pottery, some my own, and some from the Ashland Theological Seminary collection, which I'd been using in my lectures at various Bible schools and seminaries in East and Central Africa.

This indeed was one occasion in which I could hardly see anything new and lasting occurring. But God in His providence placed in that compartment a gentleman considerably my senior who must have noted my uneasiness and my over-protection of my shoulder bag. He tried in a series of indirect and finally direct questions to ascertain why I didn't just put the bag up above where it would be out of the way, and even more pointedly, what was so important about that bag anyway that I'd even sleep with it for a pillow? Finally, I decided to just tell him that it contained a quantity of old pieces of Palestinian pottery, thinking that that would turn him off. But instead my response only sparked his enthusiasm and his outright excitement.

He was quickly up and out of his berth and beside me, almost begging me for a look inside. I learned that he had taught ceramics in England for over 25 years and was on his way to Pietermaritzburg to open his own

shop. As I watched him tenderly handle each piece during a period of three or four hours, I also discovered that he was related to the famous Doulton family of the Royal Doulton China dynasty in England.

Soon the other men in the compartment were bending over to look down at the pottery collection. Two soldiers, a dentist, and a student on break from the University of Durban and Mr. Doulton were my audience that night. And they heard not only about Palestinian pottery, but about my life and witness. I had felt helpless and lonesome when I first boarded that train. I had secretly asked, "Why me, Lord, here on this night train?" But you see, that encounter with that unexpected audience became a new opportunity, a great experience, and surely one of the most unforgettable occasions of all my time in Africa. I simply would not have traded that night's experiences for anything. I learned on that occasion to listen to Paul's "except for these chains."

Chains are not without positive fallout. Paul had planned to go to Rome as a missionary evangelist; he was taken to Rome as a prisoner to defend the faith before Caesar himself. Indeed, "New occasions teach new duties." What a remarkable learning experience was that unconventional compartment on the night express to Durban.

### Redemptive Chains

Finally, I believe I can hear Paul saying with reference to his chains: "I accept and even hold up for you these chains since they are God's redemptive symbol for you and others. Yes, these chains are God's mark of a redemptive process at work." Paul again expressed this aspect of his chains so candidly in the Epistle to the Philippians.

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved — and that by God.

*(continued on next page)*



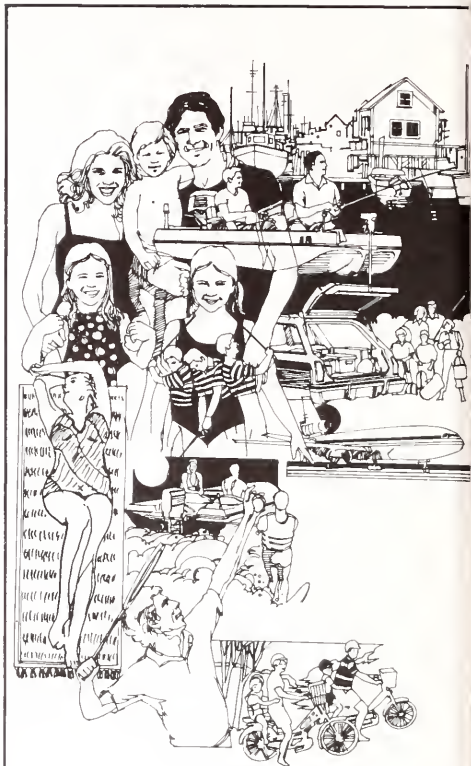
For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him, since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have. (Phil. 1:27-30)

Jim Elliott, one of the five missionaries martyred by the Auca Indians, wrote in his diary, "He is no fool who loses what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." Following Jesus involves us in costly discipleship. Paul was aware that his chains were part of that redemptive act of suffering and humiliation which took place in the sacrifice and death of Jesus Christ. As a proud Pharisee, Paul had long before been broken in pride and in religious spirit. But he was broken only to be reborn and reshaped for service to Christ and His Church.

Chains are clearly a symbol of

submissive brokenness in the life of the prisoner. So, too, the chains that come into our Christian life today may impede our spiritual progress, may cause us varying degrees of inconvenience, and can even create impossible demands which would literally break us. But with Paul we need to see obstacles as opportunities for deeper spiritual growth and commitment.

Paul, despite his many chains in life, never gave up. He looked to Jesus — the author and perfecter of the faith. He participated in the struggle for faith. He experienced the redeeming work of sharing with Christ and others the unfinished task of evangelizing. Paul's living example of dealing with his chains witnessed to Herod Agrippa and his court on that day so long ago, and it offers us a challenge in our Christian walk even today. [†]



## Becoming a New Person

By Robert Westfall

**A**UGUSTINE of Hippo, perhaps antiquity's greatest theologian, accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord when he was 33 years old. His life up to that time had been one of carnal, licentious living.

He was converted through a sermon from Romans 13:13-14, which he overheard in a garden. Augustine's life was changed. God had touched his heart. He left his former life of license.

When he returned home, his former girlfriend called out to him, "Augustine, Augustine, it is I."

He turned and said, "Yes, but it is not I."

This story beautifully illustrates Paul's words of joy: *Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come* (II Cor. 5:17, NASB).

Salvation produces a decisive change that brings abiding results. To underscore this truth, Paul declared in I Corinthians 6:9-10 that

the unrighteous will not inherit heaven. He goes on and lists ten unrighteous lifestyles. Then he proclaimed in verse 11: *And such were some of you . . .* (NASB).

Read those last six words again: *And such were some of you . . .*

Our Father, in great grace, loved us when you and I were unrighteous — a rebel or a drunk or a gossip or a crook or a liar or a brawler or a hypocrite or a playboy or an adulteress or a do-gooder or a legalist or a dropout or a drug addict. Looking for sinners, He found us in desperate straits. Lifting us to the level of His much-loved Son, He brought us in, washed our wounds, and changed our direction.

The Apostle Paul concluded verse 11 with these wonderful words: *. . . but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God* (NASB).

John Newton, author of the hymn *Amazing Grace*, said, "I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I wish to be, I am not what I hope to be; but, by the grace of God, I am not what I was." [†]

**M**OST OF US will squeeze in some time this summer for R & R. Perhaps an extended vacation will take us many miles from home. Or maybe we'll simply relish the luxury of spending a week around the house, free from our normal work responsibilities. Whatever the case, here are a few suggestions to help you make the most of this special time.

**First**, rediscover one another. Throughout the year many forces pull the family apart. It's easy for communication to slip. Good will and mutual respect can waver. We can take each other for granted.

A family-centered vacation provides opportunity to study and appreciate those we live with day after day. By spending a block of time together, we can gain fresh understanding of those special qualities that make our loved-ones precious to us.

So make time for conversation and fellowship. Open your heart and relate your feelings. Express love and appreciation. Share yourself.

A word of caution. A sudden and

*Mr. Schoenhals is a free-lance writer who lives in Seattle, Washington.*

*Rev. Westfall is pastor of the First Brethren Church of Pleasant Hill, Ohio. This article is reprinted, by permission, from the church newsletter.*

# How to Have a Great Vacation

As we enter the time of year when many will be taking vacations, G. Roger Schoenhals offers suggestions for making your time away from work an enriching and renewing experience.

prolonged togetherness can create problems of its own. You'll want to allow some breathing space for each member of the family.

**Second**, broaden your horizons. Turning off your brain and planting yourself in front of the TV for a solid week will rob you of many vacation benefits. Instead of adopting the way of the sluggard, why not use these special days to ease yourself out of some old ruts?

Expand the borders of your life by doing something you've never done before. Visit a place you've never seen. Talk to a travel agent for ideas. Look at the advertising section of outdoor magazines. Ask your friends for input. Be adventurous.

Use your spare time to read some good books. Delve into some of the classics. Attend a cultural event. Use your vacation to enrich and improve yourself.

**Third**, allow opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual renewal. Schedule time for just you and God. Take a long walk in the early morning and enjoy the sunrise. Go out in the stillness of the night and view the stars. Meditate on God's grace and goodness. Let His Spirit refresh and revive your soul.

Nature can draw us to the Creator. I remember sitting alone on a rocky beach, thinking of God's goodness to me. I was suddenly inspired to select a stone and to link it with a particular blessing. Then I took a second stone and let it represent another blessing. Soon I had a circle of stones before me, each signifying something special in my life.

Then I thought of my needs and I began selecting stones to represent these. As I petitioned the Lord for each need, I placed the stone in the middle of the circle of blessings. The symbolism gave me perspective in viewing my needs in light of God's goodness and faithfulness.

Then I recalled a verse in I Peter: "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you" (5:7). I looked out at the water and thought of the "sea of His infinite love." And so I took each stone from the inside of the circle and, with a prayer of commitment, tossed it far into the water. I felt a sense of release.

A sunset has reminded me of God's beauty. A mountain has reminded me of His strength. A cascading stream has prompted thoughts of His refreshing presence. A star-spangled sky has spoken to me of His greatness. Nature never fails to speak, if we will stop and listen.

**Fourth**, remember your church. Though your vacation may take you away from services of worship, you can continue to support your spiritual family with prayer. Remember those who carry on the ministries of teaching, visitation, music, administration, and preaching.

When you visit another church on your vacation, look for ideas that can enrich your home church. Your pastor will appreciate receiving bulletins and other printed material from different churches.

You'll also want to remember the financial needs of your church family. Summertime is often a slack period in financial support. Make plans to keep up your giving commitment, even during your absence.

**Finally**, relax. If you return to work or school exhausted and tense, your vacation has been a flop. So, whatever you do, lay back and soak in some sunshine. Breathe deeply. Don't overplan or overplay. Rest your body, mind, and spirit.

Recreation means re-creation. And that's what a good vacation does. With a little planning and discipline, you'll return home renewed, refreshed, and ready to begin a new chapter of personal and family life. Have yourself a great vacation! [†]





# South America:

## A Report to the Brethren

An overview of his April administrative visit to Brethren Mission work in South America, by Missionary Board Executive Director Rev. James R. Black.

**I**T'S VERY GOOD to be home! I arrived back in Ashland during the early morning hours of April 28, 1989. It was so nice to enter the Cleveland terminal and to be greeted by a smiling David Cooksey. I'm not certain his duties include being the Welcome Home Committee for traveling mission executives, but it was good to be greeted by someone who is comfortable speaking English.

My South America administrative visit this year was quite different from former trips. This time I entered South America by way of Buenos Aires, Argentina, and departed from Bogotá, Colombia. Other times the reverse was true. Also, this visit included time in Paraguay and Peru. Finally, my "brag" that I never have had any serious problems is no longer true. I was frightened by gun shots fired on the street outside my hotel window in Bogotá. And I returned home without \$1,250 in video equipment, which was very skillfully stolen in Colombia.

But those are the negatives. I can report much that was good. And even though I suffered several days of rather serious illness, experienced a bit of a scare when documents had to be presented at an unexpected road block, and encountered a broken seatback during take-off on a flight from Bogotá to Medellín, I still praise the Lord for those weeks in South America.

### Argentina

I was encouraged by the determination of our missionaries and the national leadership in Argentina. Granted, I found it a bit depressing to listen to the very enthusiastic

goals (and hopes) of the Argentina leadership while at the same time having to remind them of budget limitations. But when they do so much with so little, I am humbled just to be a participant. I visited a number of churches, preached for an exciting service at Colon, met with the city officials at Bombal, saw first hand the new work at Bell Ville and at Tortugas, enjoyed the fellowship of the Argentine Brethren at Soldini, and much more.

I bring you greetings from your missionaries to Argentina: Ray and Marilyn Aspinall, Bill and Sharon Winter, and Allen Baer. I bring you greetings as well from the national church leaders and the Brethren in Argentina.

### Peru and Paraguay

Ray Aspinall and I departed from Buenos Aires on Thursday, April 13, and flew to Asunción, Paraguay, where we were met by Juan Antonio Anzulovich and his lovely wife, Beatriz (Cookie). What a joy and privilege to meet these exciting people and to see first hand the work being done in this beautiful country! I came home determined to learn more about Paraguay.

In spite of the recent overthrow of government leadership, I encountered virtually no problems. I grew to love the people, especially the Brethren at Asunción, the Anzulovich family, and their very special helpers, Norma (a young Guarani Indian) and Oscar (an Argentinian), who are assisting with the work. You will hear much of Paraguay in the years to come. I believe that God will permit us to be a part of a dynamic Brethren Church in that country . . . and soon!

We departed from Asunción on April 18 and were greeted in Lima, Peru, by our good friend Miguel Antunez. As could be expected, Miguel was witnessing to a young man who was trying to pick up fares in his private auto. Since Miguel desired to continue talking with the man, we agreed to let him take us to the hostel in downtown Lima. So we were literally jammed into an ancient (and very dirty and unsafe) VW Beetle, and somehow made it to our destination.

We had little time for sightseeing in Lima, but did get a taste of the great city. I was able, along with Miguel, to meet with people at the embassy in an attempt to obtain a student visa for Miguel. So far this effort has produced no results. We visited the school where Miguel and Sonia are teaching, and had a wonderful dinner with both Sonia's and Miguel's families. Both Sonia and Miguel, along with young Carlos, send love and greetings to the Brethren in North America.

### Colombia

After too brief a stay in Peru, we departed for Colombia. It was good to be back in beautiful Bogotá, and to greet once again our workers and missionaries. They looked great! I don't need to remind you of the faithful work of the Logans. It is hard to realize that after July they will no longer be in Colombia. They have served so faithfully and well.

We expect the present missionaries in Colombia to continue the good work of the Logans. Tim and Jan Solomon and their children are right at home in Villa Del Rio. They seem to be exactly what is needed in Bogotá. What a privilege it was to spend time with them and to sense the joy and excitement of a satisfying ministry!

The same was true in Medellín. David and Diane Kerner and their children have been wonderfully accepted by grateful Colombians anxious to work with them in the further development of The Brethren Church in Colombia. God does do all things well. Like Tim and Jan, David and Diane are *exactly* what is needed in Colombia. I heard nothing but praise from their dedicated and committed people.

*(continued on next page)*



# Jesus Is Lord

"... that in everything He might have the supremacy" (Col. 1:18).

By Moderator Kenneth L. Sullivan

**I** LOVED my grandmother. She has been gone for some years, but my memories of her are still vivid. She was a spirited, inquisitive person who loved life and was not afraid of new things. The depression steeled her determination to be unyielding in the face of hardships and courageous in the pursuit of personal growth.

She never seemed to fear the future. If anything, she marched boldly into it, curious as to what she might find, eager to expand her world. She held strong opinions but was always willing to learn and change when necessary. I loved the warmth of her home and the fellowship of family gatherings there. She was a symbol of balance and stability upon which I could build my life.

## A worthy example

We need more people like my grandmother, people who are adventuresome in spirit — unafraid of the future and willing to take the necessary steps to get there. Her life manifested a belief that Jesus is the Lord of the future. She demonstrated a trust that our Lord is "the same yesterday and today and forever" (Heb. 13:8) and that the life of faith is fixing "our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen" (II Cor. 4:18).

We are creatures of habit and comfort. We prefer things to remain the same: unchanged, familiar, with

an appearance of stability. But the Christian life does not afford us such comfort. On the contrary, we are called to see ourselves as "aliens and strangers" in this world (I Pet. 2:11), to be obedient as Abraham was, when he set forth "even though he did not know where he was going" (Heb. 11:8). It is as if God goes out of His way to make sure that we never get too comfortable — by prodding, pushing, pulling, and encouraging us to step out in a faith adventure with Him.

## Willing to take a risk

I have discovered that the most exciting times in my walk with God have occurred precisely when I have been willing to risk all for Him in a step of faith. It is at the point where I surrender my hold on the present that a door opens for my Lord to lead me into the future. There is risk involved — the possibility of failure, of being made to look foolish, and of discovering that I am wrong. But there is also the exhilaration of personal growth, success, and accomplishment in ministry.

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." The Bible assures us that "from everlasting to everlasting the LORD's love is with those who fear him" (Ps. 103:17). We are to have reverential fear of the Lord, not of the future. We can be confident about tomorrow

because our Lord is already there waiting for us. Therefore we can enter into the future boldly.

The early Christians were risk-takers. They were people like Paul and Barnabas, the first missionaries of the church in Antioch, who were described as "men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 15:26). The word translated "risk" is a gambling term that means to wager, to take a risk, to lay something on the line.

The early Christians were so convinced of human lostness, of the truth of the gospel, of the possibility of spiritual transformation, and of the necessity of missions and evangelism that they risked life and limb to carry the gospel message into new places. There was nothing complacent about them. They believed that the future belonged to the church, and they were determined to get there whatever the cost. They were a people on a bold mission — consumed and committed.

The Brethren Church needs to be a risk-taker in the same sense. The greatest achievements in the history of the church and of missions have come when church leaders and lay people were in touch with God; when church people looked to the future with courage and walked confidently into tomorrow, assured that their Lord had prepared their way.

As Brethren, we have begun a journey with God. He has not shown us the end, only the beginning. Our calling is to be faithful and obedient to the open door our Lord has provided, as we work through the process of reorganization and discover what new adventures in ministry await us in the future. [†]

(continued from page 8)

I bring you greetings from the Logans, the Solomons, the Kerners. They do appreciate your support, encouragement, and prayers.

So there you are! A little bad, just to make the trip interesting, but a real joy and privilege for me to announce to you Brethren that your workers in South America are doing a good and faithful service. Thank you, Brethren, and my board, for permitting me to have a small part in the South America ministry of The Brethren Church.

But it is good to be home. [†]



## Nominees for General Conference Executive Council

The General Conference Nominating Committee has prepared the following slate of nominees for positions on the General Conference Executive Council, to be elected in August.

### For Moderator-Elect

*Rev. Gene A. Eckerley*, 45, Brethren pastor since 1964. Served the Tiosa and Pleasant Hill Churches and currently pastors the Ardmore Brethren Church. Served as 1982-83 Ohio District moderator, 1987-88 Indiana District moderator, and on various district boards and committees. He has

been called to serve part-time in the new position of Indiana District Elder.

*Rev. James Sluss*, 50, taught at Krypton Mission, was C.E. director at Nappanee Brethren Church, and since 1975 has pastored Brethren congregations — Dutchtown, Lathrop, and currently the Roanoke Brethren Church. He is a past moderator of the Indiana District, served on the national Board of Christian Education, and currently is on the Brethren Retirement Board.

### For Member at Large

*Rev. Albert Curtright*, 78, retired

Brethren pastor. Pastored the Carleton, Brighton Chapel, Milford, Burlington, and Cheyenne Brethren Churches. Served as district moderator, president of the Benevolent Board, president of the Brethren's Home, and on various district committees. Currently an Ashland College trustee and member of the National Ordination Council.

*Rev. Kenneth Hunn*, 34, in his ninth year as pastor of the Warsaw Brethren Church. Formerly served as assistant to the pastor at the Elkhart and Park Street Brethren Churches. He is currently moderator of the Indiana District, a member of the national Board of Christian Education, and a member of the Indiana District Ministry of Pastoral and Congregational Care.

### For East Region Representative

*Lois L. Hutzell*, 64, life-long member of the St. James Brethren Church, where she served as choir director, youth leader, and currently teaches Sunday school. She has served the Southeastern District as conference secretary, statistician, board of Christian education member, and camp worker. Employed by St. John's Episcopal Church of Hagerstown as administrative secretary.

*Paul Yoder*, 64, member, deacon, and trustee of the Sarasota Brethren Church. Helped organize the Florida District, which he served as moderator and treasurer and of which he is currently moderator-elect. Helped organize the Bradenton Brethren Church, which he served as moderator for several years. Organized and developed Yoder's Aluminum, from which he retired in 1984.

### For Midwest Region Representative

*Virgil L. Barnhart*, 67, member, deacon, and Sunday school teacher at Gratis Brethren Church. He is a member of the Brethren Publishing Co. Board of Directors, a past General Conference moderator, past president and current treasurer of the National Laymen Organization, and chairman of the General Conference Ministry Recruitment Committee. He is retired from General Motors.

*Rev. Gerald Barr*, 42, Brethren pastor since 1972, pastoring the Mexico and County Line Brethren Churches and currently the Sarver Brethren Church. Served as 1985-86 Pennsylvania District moderator, is secretary-treasurer of the National Association of Brethren Church Elders, a member of the General Conference Polity Committee, and on the Brethren Publishing Co. Board of Directors.

## EVANGELISM WORKSHOPS AND RESOURCE MATERIAL

Sponsored by the General Conference Evangelism Committee

Advertisement

Are you looking for ways to begin or enhance your **visitation ministry**?

Do you need to sharpen your **personal evangelism** skills?

Are you looking for resources to strengthen your annual **revival meeting**?

If you answered "yes" to one or more of these questions, then you should consider attending one of the following 1989 General Conference Workshops and also purchasing the book described below.

### WORKSHOPS

#### "Probing for Prospects"

This workshop, led by Pastor Dave Olgee of the West Alexandria First Brethren Church, will assist your local church in reaching both the "out of church" members and the unchurched. The focus of the workshop will be practical, providing workable ideas — some basic, others unique — for developing a growing visitation ministry. The seminar will be given on both Tuesday and Thursday of Conference week.

#### "Sowing Seeds"

##### "Making Jesus' Parable Alive Among the Brethren"

In this workshop, Pastor Ken Hunn of the Warsaw, Ind., First Brethren Church will lead participants in discovering how our Lord's parable of the sower can be used as both a personal and a church-wide strategy for soul-winning. Practical suggestions and strategies will be offered to help increase your evangelistic potential. Time for questions and discussion will also be provided. The Tuesday session will focus on "The Sower and the Seed"; the Thursday session on "The Sower and the Soil."

\* \* \* \* \*

### RESOURCE BOOK

#### "Planning, Preparing, and Preserving Evangelism and Revival Services in the Local Church"

This book by Dr. J. Ray Klingensmith presents practical, down-to-earth suggestions for planning and conducting evangelistic meetings and for conserving the results of those meetings. The final chapter describes the office, role, and function of the evangelist. Available for \$2.00 each at General Conference or by mail from the Brethren Publishing Company, 524 College Avenue, Ashland, Ohio. (When ordering by mail, add 65¢ per book for postage).

# Postures of Peace

By C. William Cole, Peace Committee Member

## Outstretched Arms

**P**EACE has many postures. The central posture is the outstretched arms of Jesus, which bring peace between our heart and the heart of God. Peace was obtained by the God-man, Christ Jesus, when He hung on the cross with outstretched arms and cried, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

Paul states it so clearly: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ . . ." (Rom. 5:1). Through faith, we are no longer enemies. If every person had peace with God, humans would put down their weapons.

It is very sad when large groups of Christians do not teach that we can have the assurance of peace with God. How dare we live in doubt of that peace, which was purchased by Jesus with outstretched arms!

## Outstretched Hands

A second posture of peace demonstrated by Jesus is the posture of outstretched hands, as an invitation to sinners. Not all sinners come; most do not listen. "All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people" (Rom. 10:21).

But many do come. Nicodemus came to Jesus by night, and Jesus said, "Nicodemus, you must be born again," meaning that he must respond to the outstretched hands of God. Thousands of others came to Jesus during His ministry, and thousands more at Pentecost. People have kept on coming ever since.

## Extending a Helping Hand

Extending a helping hand to one in need is a third posture of peace. A

famous painting shows Jesus reaching down to a lamb caught on a shrub growing on a steep mountain-side. Its bleating could not be heard very far away, but Jesus heard it.

Do we hear Jesus telling us where the needy are? The truly needy do not make loud cries. Keep your eyes open and ask the Lord to show you where they are.

## Shaking Hands

The shaking of hands is another common posture of peace. Some use it falsely; many an unfriendly encounter has ended with the shaking of hands. But harsh words, a trespass, or even an auto accident can end with a peaceful shaking of hands.

I was in an auto accident last year. The other party said I was at fault. Three other drivers told the other party that they would be witnesses for him. I felt at peace and said, "It may be my fault." The police were friendly and asked if I had my seat belt on. I said, "Yes."

In six days my insurance company called and gave me a good cash settlement for the totaled car. I asked the adjuster, "Who was at fault according to the police?"

"The other fellow," he answered.

"Even with all three witnesses?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied, and we are glad to win a case for a change."

So I shook hands again. My insurance did not go up. Let us be peacemakers by shaking hands.

## A Wave of the Hand

A wave of the hand is the fleetest posture of peace. Just a wave of the hand can convey the message "I'm sorry" to an angered motorist. We offend thoughtlessly by not watching out for the other driver.

We know that some drivers carry firearms. A very few use them. In 1946 our car completely wore out. I hitchhiked to a city 27 miles away to

borrow money from a bank. On the way back, after walking for miles, I was offered a ride by a driver in a pickup truck. I was apprehensive when I saw a revolver lying under his seat, and I quickly introduced myself as a pastor. When he left me off, I waved my hand to him.

Have you waved your hand to others because of the courtesies they have shown you on the highway? Do you sometimes wave to strangers? It's a gesture of peace.

## Folding Your Arms

A little-used posture of peace is the folding of one's arms flat across the chest. It is used when you are facing a person who is threatening violence. A policeman suggested this to me some years ago.

I had the opportunity to put his suggestion into practice late one night when I was called to disarm a mentally ill man who was threatening his wife with a butcher knife. I entered the front door of the house and stood there with my arms folded across my chest as I talked with the man for almost an hour. He finally put down the knife and began to cry. The man went to the hospital that night and in time recovered. He lived out his days with his wife. Because of Jesus, he was kept from committing murder.

As we left Pastors Conference at the Mennonite Conference Center near Mount Pleasant, Pa., in April, we looked up at the gateway to the center and saw in large letters the word "Shalom." Joanne, my wife, said, "Isn't this a wonderful way to leave the conference?"

As Jesus concluded His ministry, before going to the cross, He said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

Peace to all the Brethren! Shalom.

*Rev. Cole is pastor of the Fairless Hills-Levittown, Pa., Brethren Church.*



# Creating a Climate for Hearing God's Call

By Kerry Scott

**I**T HAS BEEN about 20 minutes since I hung up the receiver following a phone conversation with one of those "telemarketing" sales representatives. My blood is still boiling.

How can a company expect me to make a commitment to their product on the basis of one telephone call? To me, this sales method is an indication of how far our society has regressed in its understanding of the kind of relational setting needed to develop trust in a product, no matter what it may be.

I believe that commitment is always based on a foundation of faith and trust. Such faith and trust is rooted in a relational setting in which the one doing the "calling" attempts to know and understand the needs of the one being asked to make the commitment. In my estimation, a high-pressure phone call falls a little short of that ideal.

The Brethren Church has always had a rich history in terms of the "call" and commitment of men and women to full-time Christian ministry. The local church provided the setting in which the call was realized. The congregation provided the *relational framework* that was foundational for ministry recruitment within the church.

But it appears that this framework has weakened in recent years. A witness to this is the fact that the number of those making a commitment to full-time ministry



has become smaller and smaller. I don't pretend to have all the answers to this situation, *but I do believe that the local church is not being intentional enough in calling men and women to ministry*, and that the church is ignoring the relational framework that is the basis upon which people make a commitment to ministry.

## Some revealing questions

Let me ask some questions at this point. When was the last time that you — a pastor, deacon, youth leader, or Sunday school teacher — encouraged a specific person to consider full-time ministry within the church? When was the last time your congregation made a commitment within its budget to support a local person in seminary? When was the last time your Sunday school superintendent or Christian education director encouraged you as a teacher to talk to your students about considering the ministry? When was the last time a sermon on the call and commitment to Christian ministry was preached in your church? Your answers to these questions will reveal the level of commitment you and your church have made on this issue.

What exactly is involved in a call to Christian ministry, and how is that call the same as or different from the call that everyone re-

ceives as a Christian? In his first letter to the church at Corinth, Paul shares his understanding of what a "call" is and how we all experience that call. He also reveals how his call to leadership was different from that general call.

Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes,

To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours:

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I Cor. 1:1-3\*

First we note that Paul was called to a specific purpose — to be an Apostle. Perhaps you recall the passage in the Book of Acts that records the Lord's directive to Ananias, the disciple in Damascus, telling him to visit Paul following his blinding encounter with the Lord. The Lord told Ananias, "This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel" (Acts 9:15).

The "call" in Paul's case was for a particular purpose and mission — to bring a message of love and

\*Quotations from the Bible are from the *New International Version*.

*Rev. Scott is pastor of the Jefferson Brethren Church near Goshen, Ind. He wrote this article on behalf of the General Conference Ministry Recruitment Committee, of which he is a member.*

# Ministry Recruitment

***"The challenge to the church today is to realize the general calling in which we all participate, and, in addition, to begin enabling and encouraging young men and women (and older ones as well) to see their potential for responding to God's specific call to leadership within the church."***

reconciliation in the name of Jesus Christ to the world around him. His mission was not to initiate programs or to be an administrator, but to be God's instrument for bringing reconciliation to the people. Paul's call was to a leadership role within the church.

## **The general call**

But Paul reminds the Corinthian Christians that they, too, were called. Their calling was to be a different kind of people. They were called to be saints, or to be holy, depending on your version. The word used here means to be "set apart" from the rest of the world. The word translated "called" also implies action, implying that the church members are to *actively* separate themselves from the values of the rest of the world.

*Everyone in the church has received this calling.* We share this common "glue," which holds us together. The Holy Spirit has entered each of our lives and has set us apart for God's service. We are called to actively separate ourselves from the value structure of the world and to actively live in service for Christ.

## **A specific call**

But in addition to this general call which all receive, God calls some Christians to positions of service and pastoral leadership within the local congregation. As in Paul's case, this call is not something that is desired or even wanted. If it is, I personally doubt that the call is genuine, because it is based upon personal desire and one's own agenda, rather than on the Lord's will.

The Lord calls some to be prophets, teachers, pastors, evangelists (and might I add to that list

Christian education directors, associate pastors, youth workers, and musicians), "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:12, 13).

The challenge to the church today is to realize the general calling in which we all participate, and, in addition, to begin enabling and encouraging young men and women (and older ones as well) to see their potential for responding to God's specific call to leadership within the church.

## **Suggestions for action**

On behalf of the Ministry Recruitment Committee of The Brethren Church, I would like to suggest some specific actions for you and your church to take in this area.

1. Set aside June 4 as a special Sunday on which to emphasize and promote the calling of persons to leadership and full-time ministry positions within the church. The sermon that Sunday could be devoted to the topic of God's call upon the life of the individual, with a challenge to the people to respond to His potential call. Sunday school teachers could likewise talk about the topic of God's call in their classes that morning, and for several weeks afterward.

2. *Pastors and/or deacons:* Develop a list of people in your congregation who show evidence of the gift of leadership, and make contact with them prior to the special Sunday. Ask them to seriously consider whether God is challenging them to full-time Christian service. Follow up on them afterwards. Don't hesitate to bring up the sub-

ject again if you feel that the Lord is dealing with them regarding this decision.

3. *Sunday school teachers and/or youth leaders:* Administer a spiritual gifts inventory during a Sunday school class or youth session. (If you need help with this, contact your pastor.) Make note of those who score high in the areas of leadership, pastoring, and evangelism (to name a few), and talk to them personally about their potential for full-time ministry. Ask them to think and pray seriously about this.

4. *Pastors, teachers, and youth workers:* Don't be too narrow in your definition of what full-time ministry is and is not. Churches today are hiring people for a variety of positions, including pastor, business administrator, minister of music, youth worker, Christian education director, and missionary. Encourage individuals to be creative in seeking how they might be used.

## **A setting of encouragement**

Just as I was turned off by the high pressure phone call, no Christian likes to be high-pressured into making a commitment to full-time Christian ministry. But when the church creates a setting of encouragement, built upon elements of faith and trust within the context of Christian community, then by the Lord's grace we will form spiritual relationships that create the potential for service in His kingdom. For some, that potential for service will be realized in full-time Christian ministry. Let's begin to intentionally challenge our young people to commit their lives to leadership roles within the church, including full-time Christian service. [†]



Registration for:  
"Jesus Is Lord"

# 1989 General Conference

Monday, August 7 thru  
Friday, August 11

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please reserve only one room per form. YOUTH are to register through the Board of Christian Education if staying in YOUTH DORMS. If staying with adults, use this form. NOTE: Registration with prepayment by July 21 results in guaranteed reservation.

## HOUSING AND MEAL PACKAGES:

Housing will be in Manchester College dormitories.

Housing and all meals\* (rates are per person):

Five nights (Sun. thru Thur. nights)  
(Breakfast Mon. thru breakfast Fri.)

Single  
room

\$97.50†

Double  
room

\$87.50

No. Persons x Rate

\_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Four nights (Mon. thru. Thur. nights)  
(Breakfast Tues. thru breakfast Fri.)

78.50†

68.50

\_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

Housing only (rates are per night)

15.00†

10.00

No. Nights x Rate/Night

Nights staying: S \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ T \_\_\_\_\_ W \_\_\_\_\_ Th \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parents in doubles may bring cots, cribs, or sleeping bags for small children.)

†while available

\_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

## Meals only

Price

No. Persons x Rate

Five-day package (all meals\* breakfast Mon. thru breakfast Fri.)

\$53.50

\_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

Four-day package (all meals\* breakfast Tue. thru breakfast Fri.)

41.50

\_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

\*"All meals" includes banquet and luncheon tickets.

Total Housing & Meals = \_\_\_\_\_

## SPECIAL EVENTS RESERVATIONS:

MEALS (Note: These meals are included in the packages above. This section is only for those not purchasing a meal or housing/meal package.) No. Tickets

Tues. eve. — Seminary Banquet \_\_\_\_\_ x \$6.50 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Thur. — WMS Luncheon (women, BYC girls) \_\_\_\_\_ x 5.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

— NLO Picnic (men, pastors, BYC boys) \_\_\_\_\_ x 4.50 = \_\_\_\_\_

Thur. Eve. — MBBC Missions Banquet \_\_\_\_\_ x 8.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

Total Meals Enclosed = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOUR: Brethren Historical Bus Tour of Northern Indiana (Arnold's  
Grove, Old Order Meeting House, Brethren Murals at Camp Mack)  
on Wednesday afternoon; \$10.00 per person; \$25.00 per family.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

## SUMMARY TOTALS

Total Housing & Meals = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Meals Enclosed = \_\_\_\_\_

Total Tour Enclosed = \_\_\_\_\_

Total Children/Junior  
Youth Fees Enclosed = \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Makes checks payable to:

**General Conference Housing**

## CHILDREN & JUNIOR YOUTH PROGRAMS:

Tues.—Thurs. — 8:45 a.m. to 5:15 p.m.; Fri. — 8:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

### Family Rates

	Week	Day
1 child	\$35.00	\$11.50
2 children	\$52.50	\$17.50
3 children	\$70.00	\$23.00

— A minimum enrollment of 12 in each program is needed to provide this service.

— No refunds for children's programs can be given after July 22 unless minimum enrollment is not met.

Children (3 years thru 2nd grade; completed)

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Days (circle)

T W Th F \$ \_\_\_\_\_

T W Th F \_\_\_\_\_

Junior Youth (those who have completed 3rd thru 6th grade)

Youth's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Days (circle)

T W Th F \$ \_\_\_\_\_

T W Th F \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach a note regarding any allergies (especially food), medical conditions and nap routine. Total for Children/Youth \$ \_\_\_\_\_

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY: Reg. # \_\_\_\_\_ Date rec. \_\_\_\_\_ Rec. by \_\_\_\_\_ Amount/Check \_\_\_\_\_ Check# \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form as soon as possible with payment in full (but no later than July 21).

Send to: General Conference Housing, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805

# National Association of Evangelicals Resolutions

*At the National Association of Evangelicals convention held in March, delegates adopted four resolutions on pressing social issues of our day. In order that Brethren may be informed of the positions taken on these issues by this national evangelical body, one of these resolutions (on Child Care and the Federal Government) was included in last month's issue, and the remaining three are printed below.*

## Alcohol Abuse

In 1968, the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) addressed with alarm the social, moral and spiritual consequences of alcohol abuse. At that time, we called for the enforcement of existing laws on alcohol sales, possession and use, as well as the enactment of new laws against drunken driving. In keeping with our historic stance, we also called on our churches to take seriously the national problem of alcohol use, educating their members to its dangers and encouraging them to practice abstinence.

Today, the problem of alcohol use has been so aggravated that among experts in the field of substance abuse, a growing consensus is condemning alcohol as a "gateway drug" into illegal drugs and addiction. Statistics are also mounting which show that there is a link between alcohol and crime, fatal accidents, domestic violence, family breakdown, personal debilitation and suicide. Children and youth have become both victims and abusers.

The magnitude of the problem is so great that a number of groups have emerged to fight alcohol abuse. These groups, however, are not currently supported by a significant public consensus or by the political, media, corporate or religious communities. Parents who use alcohol are caught in the contradiction of trying to be a role model for their children while failing to set an example for them.

The time has come for the National Association of Evangelicals to speak and act again in the following ways:

1. Strongly encourage those national organizations which are against alcohol use and abuse, and to join them in condemning the media message that equates alcohol with the good life for adults and which communicates to youth the message: "You can't have fun without alcohol."

2. Urge NAE churches to make al-

cohol education and ministry to alcohol victims a priority.

3. Request the media and the corporate community to join in sponsoring informative programs on the "down side" of alcohol use.

4. Request public figures, such as athletes and entertainers, to avoid endorsing alcohol use.

5. Promote congressional legislation that would:

- a) Label alcohol as a dangerous drug which can result in personal and social harm;

- b) Ban advertising of alcohol on television.

6. Urge corporate advertisers not to jointly sponsor television programs, such as the Olympics and other athletic events, with the alcohol industry.

## Ministry to Persons with Disabilities

Over 35 million Americans are physically or mentally disabled. Difficulties associated with disability often cause individuals and their families stress and trauma and sometimes raise questions about God, His power and His goodness.

Families with members who suffer from disabilities also experience other pressures that, when succumbed to, can result in a higher incidence of poverty, unemployment, family disintegration, substance abuse and suicide. Adding to the problem is the mobility of American families as they move and lose the support groups that are needed in times of personal distress.

The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) desires to take positive steps of action to compassionately respond to people in such situations. We acknowledge that Jesus' ministry on earth singled out the weak, the poor and the disabled for special concern. Because of the model Jesus provided and the need that exists, we call upon our member churches and Christians everywhere to:

1. Reach out to disabled people and welcome them into the life of the church.

2. Establish among members of the church a Christian ethic that gives respect, acceptance and assistance to all disabled persons.

3. Remove physical and communication barriers that hinder access of disabled people to the worship services

and to the recreational and social activities of the church.

4. Extend transportation services, as needed, to those of limited mobility so that they might participate in church activities.

5. Celebrate the spiritual gifts of disabled people by allowing them to serve and to be served, and by incorporating their gifts into the life and worship of the Body.

6. Provide the leadership necessary to minister effectively to disabled persons by offering curriculum, instituting programs and providing special training for workers.

## Persecuted Christians in the USSR

Thousands of persecuted Christians have emigrated from the Soviet Union during the past year. This unprecedented event presents the evangelical community with the opportunity to welcome fellow believers to America, assist them in their efforts to become naturalized citizens and help them adjust to life in the United States.

For decades, many believers in the Soviet Union have struggled vigorously for permission to leave because of harsh religious persecution. A thaw in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union in recent years is partly responsible for the sudden surge in the number of Christians and other religious minorities who have been allowed to emigrate. Refugee experts predict that perhaps up to 10,000 Christians and 30,000 Jews will leave the Soviet Union in 1989. The majority of Christians in the Soviet Union are prepared to endure whatever hardships occur because of their faith and to remain in their country. A small minority, however, have chosen to leave and seek refuge in countries where they can exercise their faith freely. These Christians believe they do not have a place in Soviet society.

The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) calls on the evangelical community to provide a generous and enthusiastic response to our brothers and sisters in Christ in their journey to freedom. We who live comfortably in this free society can learn from those who have suffered and endured persecution for the sake of the Gospel.

We call upon our government, as we have in similar situations, to consider the plight of these believers, recognizing that they have a well-grounded fear of further persecution and are thus entitled to refugee status. We

*(continued on next page)*





### New Classroom Building Dedicated At Ashland Theological Seminary

**Ashland, Ohio** — Ashland Theological Seminary held a dedication program on Saturday, May 13, for its new \$540,000 classroom building.

The building, which covers 10,000 square feet, houses five classrooms, two offices, and a student lounge and recreation area.

The dedication service, which was led by Dr. Frederick Finks, vice president of the seminary, included comments by Dr. Joseph Shultz, president of Ashland College and Seminary, and by Richard Van Auken, chairman of the board of trustees; a vocal solo by Leslie Lake and selections by the seminary men's chorus; and a litany of dedication, led by Thomas Stoffer, chairman of the seminary committee of the Ashland College board of trustees.

A brief dedication ceremony was

*(continued from previous page)*

also ask that serious consideration be given to increasing the number of refugees that will be allowed to immigrate to America from the Soviet Union.

Moreover, we call upon our individual members, churches and denominations to continue to support the efforts of World Relief Corporation, our inter-national assistance arm, as it responds to meet the needs of believers from the Soviet Union who need to be speedily processed in Western Europe and resettled in the United States.

also held in each of the five classrooms. As a part of each ceremony, recognition was given to the major donors whose contribution made that room possible, and in whose honor the room was named.

Three Brethren couples were among those so honored: Jack and Betty Brant, members of the Berlin, Pa., Brethren Church, for the Brant Room; Steve and Anita Hollewell, members of the Lanark, Ill., First Brethren

church, for the Hollewell Room; and Don and Jane Mossey, members of the Winding Waters Brethren Church in Elkhart, Ind., for the Mossey Room.

A fourth room, made possible by gifts from the Trinity Lutheran Church of Ashland in honor of pastor emeritus Dr. Robert Kinsey, will be known as the Trinity Room. And the fifth room, underwritten by gifts presented anonymously by friends of the seminary, has been named the Joshua Room.

The dedication program concluded with the dedication of a Holy Land pottery collection donated to the seminary by Dr. and Mrs. Delbert Flora. *(See article on next page.)*

An interesting sidelight on the new seminary building is that the engineer for the project was Jay Myers, grandson of John C. Myers, whose home was given to Ashland College and became the original seminary building and still forms an integral part of the seminary complex. The exterior architectural style of the new building is similar to that of the Myers home.

The new classroom building is the first of a two-phase program funded by the seminary's ongoing capital campaign. The second phase involves remodeling and enlarging the seminary library, which includes constructing an adjoining unit to house books, periodicals, and a study area. This work is projected to begin in the spring or summer of 1990.



*Donors for three of the five classrooms in the new building: (l. to r.) Steve and Anita Hollewell, Betty and Jack Brant, and Jane Mossey and son Mark (standing in for his father, Don, who was unable to be present for the dedication).*

## Floras Donate Pottery Collection To Ashland Theological Seminary

**Ashland, Ohio** — Dr. and Mrs. Delbert Flora have donated to Ashland Theological Seminary their personal 82-piece archaeological collection of pottery from the Holy Land.

Dr. Flora, whose ties to the seminary go back more than 60 years, said that he had used most of these pieces in his teaching, and he hopes that the collection will continue to be valuable in the classroom.

Flora entered the seminary as a student in 1925 and was the first graduate from the school after it was elevated to a post-baccalaureate institution. After serving several pastorates, he returned to the seminary in 1946 to teach. He was dean of the school from 1953 to 1963, and continued to teach through 1979. "A good part of my life was spent working at the seminary," he noted.

"Dean Flora's teaching has impacted hundreds of students over the years," said Dr. Fred Finks, vice president of the seminary. "His great interest in archaeology, as shown through his collection, resulted in an enhanced interest in the study of the Holy Land by his students. The use of this collection as a supplement to teaching will serve as a reminder of

Dean Flora's many years of dedication to the seminary."

The collection of pottery was put together by the Floras during six trips to Israel between 1952 and 1974. It includes pieces from the Chalcolithic

Age, Iron Age, Persian Period, Hellenistic Period, Roman Period, and Early, Middle, and Late Bronze Age.

The collection is housed in the seminary's new classroom building and was dedicated in a special ceremony during the dedication program for the new building on May 13. The Flora collection complements the seminary's 1,200-piece archaeological collection, which is housed in the ATS Museum.



*The Floras view pieces of their pottery collection.*

## Sullivan Speaks, Mt. Olive Choir Sings At Southeastern District Conference

**McGaheysville, Va.** — A message by General Conference Moderator Ken Sullivan and a mini-musical by the Mt. Olive Brethren Church choir were the highlights of the Southeastern District spring conference, held Saturday, April 22, at the Mt. Olive Church of Pineville, Va.

Rev. Sullivan, using Colossians 1:15-23 as his text, spoke on the Lordship of Jesus Christ. He noted that Christ's agenda is "to reconcile people to God" through Himself, and that His agenda must be our agenda — in our own lives, in our local churches, in our districts, and at the denominational level.

This message was reinforced by the mini-musical, "Let Them Know," presented by the Mt. Olive choir. The musical called attention to the church's highest priority — sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, both in our local communities and beyond.

District Moderator Richard Craver presided over the business sessions of the conference. In addition to receiving customary board and committee reports, delegates approved a recommendation from the Board of Spiritual Oversight that "churches not meeting requirements for good standing according to the By-Laws be assigned to a mission [church] category, subject to the approval of the District Mission Board." The requirements mentioned include paying district conference delegate credential fees and district apportionment, and submitting an annual statistical report.

The action involves four very small congregations in the district that have not participated in district activities for a number of years. The Board of Spiritual Oversight noted that the purpose of the recommendation is not to punish these churches, but to relieve them of obligations they appar-

ently have difficulty meeting. The board also expressed a desire to develop a closer relationship with the churches in order to serve an encouraging and supportive role to them.

As a result of this action, the Board of Spiritual Oversight and the district Mission Board will consider each congregation's situation and make a recommendation to a future district conference concerning its status as a fully established congregation or as a mission church.

Eighty-eight delegates (16 ministerial and 72 lay) attended the conference. In addition, nearly 50 non-delegates were present.

A youth conference was also held, jointly hosted by the Mt. Olive and Bethlehem Brethren Churches. A total of 31 youth and adult advisors attended the youth sessions, which were held at the home of Benny and Cathy Cupp.

The fall conference of the Southeastern District is scheduled for Saturday, September 16, at the St. Luke Brethren Church near Woodstock, Va.

— reported by Rev. Ronald W. Waters



## "Reach Your Potential" is Theme of Brethren Pastors Conference

**Masontown, Pa.** — The Laurelville Mennonite Church Center nestled in the Laurel Mountains of Western Pennsylvania provided a beautiful setting for physical rest and spiritual rejuvenation for those who attended the April 11-13 pastors conference, sponsored by the National Association of Brethren Church Elders.

A total of 126 people from seven districts attended the conference, including 67 pastors, 47 wives, several professors from Ashland Theological Seminary, and Rev. David Cooksey from the National Offices.

Group activities began with mixers, during which old friendships were renewed and new friendships started. Rev. Cooksey, Director of Pastoral Ministries, spoke at the kick-off meeting. He encouraged the pastors and wives to "Reach Your Potential," which was the conference theme.

Over the course of the three-day conference, pastors were led in discussion by the CALM (Church Administration for Leadership and Management) team from Ashland Theological Seminary. Dr. Jerry Flora spoke on "Matching Your Type and Your Style," Dr. Doug Little offered help on "Bringing Out the Best in People," and Dr. Mary Ellen Drushal discussed "Empowering Volunteers to Serve."

The same professors led the pastors' wives in two sessions, "I Am Who I

Am" and "Making Stress Work for You." Other sessions for the wives were led by Mrs. Carolyn Cooksey, who made presentations on "The Pastor Takes a Wife," "Problems and Pressures of the Parsonage," and "Pleasures and Privileges of the Parsonage."

Wednesday's schedule included a free afternoon, during which many became tourists at local places of interest, while others enjoyed the recreational and hiking facilities on the Laurelville grounds. Also on Wednes-

day, Rev. Dick Craver (president of the Elders Association), Rev. Ken Sullivan (General Conference moderator), and Rev. Cooksey led the pastors in a discussion of denominational happenings.

The wrap-up session on Thursday featured Rev. Carl Phillips, pastor of the Vinco, Pa., Brethren Church, who reinforced the conference theme, "Reach Your Potential." Rev. Doc Shank announced that the 1990 pastors conference will be held at the Northern Virginia 4-H Education Center near Front Royal, Va.

The planning committee for this year's conference was pastors David Graetz, Russell King, Dan Lawson, and Fred Miller.

— reported by Rev. Russell King



Pastors and pastors' wives exploring ways to "Reach Their Potential."

Photo by Rev. Bill Cole.

## Ashland College is Now Ashland University

**Ashland, Ohio** — The Board of Trustees of Ashland College voted during its spring meeting May 12 to change the name of the institution to Ashland University, effective immediately.

The decision followed a year-long study, which included a survey of alumni and friends of the college and careful assessment of the mission and character of the institution.

"Because of Ashland's graduate programs in business, education, and theology, the term 'university' more aptly describes what we do here at Ashland," said Dr. Joseph R. Shultz, president of the institution.

Shultz said that the name change is one aspect in the development of a plan that calls for consideration of several new programs by the early 1990s. These programs include the master of

## Deacons Ordained

**Sarver, Pa.** — Richard and Connie Callen (front row, l.) were ordained as deacons in the Sarver Brethren Church on March 5. Sarver pastor Rev. Gerald Barr (back row, l.) led the service, and Rev. Carl Phillips (back row, r.), pastor of the Vinco Brethren Church and District Evangelist, presented the message of challenge. Chester and Helen McAfoose (front row, r.), the senior deacons of the church, assisted in the laying on of hands for the new deacons.



arts in counseling, master of fine arts, and doctorate programs in education, business, and counseling psychology.

"The new name will not alter Ashland's undergraduate mission of providing a special blend of the liberal

arts and professional studies as well as a genuine concern for the individual student," Shultz said. "We are looking at being a strong undergraduate institution with carefully selected graduate offerings."



# St. James Brethren Break Ground For Addition to Their Building

**St. James, Md.** — Members of the St. James Brethren Church broke ground on Sunday morning, April 2, for an addition to their church building.

The addition will include two large narthexes; two transepts to the sanctuary (each with a basic seating capacity of 80, and one of which will be used as a chapel holding approximately 50 people); two classrooms; a new pastor's study; a new secretary's office; a new workroom/soundroom; a drive-up entrance on one side of the building; and handicapped-accessible restroom facilities on both levels of the building. In addition the chancel area of the sanctuary will be enlarged and remodeled; the lower level auditorium will be enlarged; and various exits, stairways, and sidewalks will be installed.

D. L. Baer of Hagerstown, Md., is both designer and contractor for the building. The contract is for \$286,193 and approximately half of this amount was on hand when the ground-breaking took place. Construction should be completed by October, or by November at the latest.

According to Pastor Brian Moore,

the first church building at St. James was dedicated on Christmas Day in 1886. It is possible that 103 years later, on Christmas Eve Day (which is

a Sunday this year), this latest expansion could be dedicated.

The building committee for the addition is Joe Strite (chairman), Harriette Bowers, Randy Bowers, Lois Hutzell, Marge Elgin, Paul Culler, Bobby Bowers, Richard Poffenberger, and (until his death) the late Jack Starliper.



*Nancy Starliper, whose husband, Jack, was chairman of the trustees and one of the prime movers in planning for the new building until his death last September, turns the first shovelful of earth.*

## No Excuses Accepted April 2 At Tucson's Northwest Chapel

**Tucson, Ariz.** — Pastor Bill Curtis and the youth of Northwest Brethren Chapel had members and visitors stumped on April 2, when they entered the church building on "No Excuse Sunday."

Every effort had been made to meet the needs of all comers. Fishing poles and huge catfish (live ones!) were provided for those who would rather go fishing. Golf clubs and balls were on hand for those who putt through life looking for the "holy one." A full-service camping area had been set up next to a peaceful river, for those who find their god in nature. And on the river

there was a raft, aimlessly adrift, floating towards the fires of hell.

Seats had been reserved at the back of the sanctuary for non-participants and for those who think the preaching is too loud. Hard hats were available for those who were afraid the roof would fall in because they had come to church. There were even cots and pillows, for those who would rather have slept in.

But most important of all, there was a bridge to salvation, (Christ), which got the message across to everyone.

— reported by Pastor Bill Curtis



*Above, fishing was better at the chapel on "No Excuse Sunday." At right, a tent for those intent on going camping every Sunday.*





## Dennis E. Sigle Ordained an Elder April 30 at Derby First Brethren

**Derby, Kans.** — Dennis E. Sigle was ordained a Brethren elder and his wife, Cheryl, was consecrated the wife of an elder in a service held April 30 at the First Brethren Church of Derby, where Rev. Sigle serves as pastor.

This was the second ordination for Rev. Sigle, who was ordained to the pastoral ministry in the Baptist Church in 1977.

Rev. Reilly Smith, pastor of the Mulvane, Kans., Brethren Church, presented the message for the April 30 ordination service. Other Brethren elders participating in the service were Rev. Jim Koontz and Rev. Emery Hurd. Also taking part were John Wehrman, moderator of the Derby congregation, and George Grieve.

Special music was provided by Reicka Louise Wehrman, who played the prelude, and by Caylene Hendry and Shawn Townson, who sang vocal solos. In addition, Rev. and Mrs.

*Elder and Mrs. Dennis Sigle with daughters Christy (2nd from r.) and Stephanie.*



Sigle sang a duet, and the new Brethren elder concluded the service by singing "My Tribute."

Pastor Sigle was born September 12, 1948, in McPherson, Kans. He was re-born into the Lord's family at a Youth for Christ rally in 1959, then experienced and accepted God's call to full-time Christian service while serving as a camp counselor in 1965. He received his high school diploma from Wichita High School West, earned a B.A. degree in Bible from Friends University in Wichita, and attended

Dallas Theological Seminary for three years.

He began his pastoral ministry in 1969 at South Seneca Baptist Church in Wichita, and later served several other congregations. He also taught one year at a Christian junior/senior high school in Wichita. He began serving the Derby First Brethren Church in December 1986.

Dennis and Cheryl (who was born and raised in Wichita) were married February 1, 1971. They have two children, Christy (11), and Stephanie (7).

### Missionary Board Response to the Proposed Brethren Missions Tour

*Last month's issue of the EVANGELIST carried a news report of a tour of Brethren mission work in South America being planned for February 1990. The Missionary Board has requested that the following response be printed concerning that proposed tour.*

It is understood there is value in being able to visit mission fields and observe the ministry of missions first hand. There may come a time when the availability of field personnel and political climate of countries involved would be such as to encourage such a tour. But not now.

Executive Director Jim Black met with the Executive Committee of the Missionary Board on May 4, and they gave consideration to the proposed Brethren mission tour planned by Mr. Jim Payne for early 1990. In consultation with missionary personnel and Field Councils in both Argentina and Colombia; in recognition of the State Department's "tourist advisory" issued concerning Colombia; and following the Director's first-hand observations, the Executive Committee of the Missionary Board views such a proposed tour as ill-advised at this time. The missionary personnel cannot be asked to participate in such a venture realizing their own limitations, difficult schedules, and the extremely dangerous climate to both people and possessions. We request that no further consideration be given to such a tour until such time as one can be promoted with the support and encouragement of the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church.

We judge others by performance, ourselves by intention. *Larry Eisenberg*



**Masontown, Pa.** — Linda Logan (front row, center) was commissioned as a deaconess in the Masontown Brethren Church on Sunday, March 5, during the morning worship service. She joins her husband, John (behind her), on the deacon board, as well as fellow deaconesses Dorothy Hess (l.) and Mary F. Davis (r.), and deacons Holmes Conaway (2nd l.) and Don Rosie (2nd r.). Rev. Jerald Radcliff (l.), pastor of the Johnstown, Pa., Third Brethren Church, presented the message during the worship service, and Masontown pastor Rev. Russell King (r.) took part in the commissioning service. The Logans have four children — David in Ohio, Allan and Laurie (Shadle) in Georgia, and Shannon (at home).

— reported by Nancy Wilson

## Gaye Davenport is New Administrator Of The Brethren's Home of Indiana

**Flora, Ind.** — Gaye A. Davenport has accepted the position of administrator of the healthcare center and apartment complex at The Brethren's Home of Indiana, Inc., according to an announcement by the facility's Board of Directors.

Ms. Davenport assumed the position left vacant by the resignation of Gene A. Geaslen in February.

Ms. Davenport has worked in the medical and social work environment for the elderly for 19 years and is well-versed in all aspects of long-term healthcare management.

She attended Purdue University, where she majored in supervision, and she is a 1988 graduate of the Health Facility Administrator Course at Ball State University in Muncie, Ind. There she was chosen as the "Most Likely to Succeed" in her class on the basis of her scholastic ability and her general healthcare management skills, as judged by her instructors. She also completed an intensive six-month internship at a nearby healthcare center.



*Gaye A. Davenport*

She is no stranger to the Flora community, having lived within 30 miles of The Brethren's Home all her life, so she is well-acquainted with the services available in the area. She currently lives at Rossville, Ind., but will

be moving to Flora in the near future. She has two daughters, Kelli (14) and Kara (11).

Ms. Davenport said that she is "very pleased to be able to serve the elderly in Carroll County and The Brethren Church," and indicated that anyone with healthcare questions should feel free to contact her.

## Keplinger Attends Institute At Johns Hopkins Hospital

**Linwood, Md.** — Rev. Robert Keplinger was one of a number of ministers from 14 states who attended the annual institute on "Ministry to the Sick," held April 17-19 at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Md.

Dr. Barry K. Estdt, professor of pastoral counseling and director of doctoral clinical training at Loyola College in Maryland, presented profession yet sensitive addresses on topics relating to death. Several other professors and doctors spoke on various other topics related to health and well-being, including AIDS.

The program was put together by Dr. Clyde R. Shallenberger, director of the chaplaincy service of Johns Hopkins Hospital. Dr. Shallenberger is an ordained clergyman in the Church of the Brethren. Dr. and Mrs. Shallenberger also hosted a dinner for Brethren and Church of the Brethren pastors attending the conference.

The Johns Hopkins University has approved this course for 1.6 continuing education units. The 1990 institute will be held April 30, May 1, and 2, with the Dr. Rabbi Edwin H. Friedman as visiting lecturer.

## Billy Graham Calls for Urgent Prayer for China

**London, England** — Evangelist Billy Graham has called for Christians around the world to unite in immediate and urgent prayer for China.

"The situation is very sensitive and complex, and virtually unprecedented in world history," Mr. Graham said. "Many are saying that there is no way out of this confrontation. I believe that Christians must respond in prayer to ask for God's solution to this crisis, which is shaking the world's largest nation to its foundations."

Mr. Graham, who himself traveled to China last year, said that his wife and three daughters are currently visiting China.

"While there, they have had the opportunity to speak in various churches and Bible Studies," he said. "They were in Beijing during the period of the Gorbachev visit and witnessed the demonstrations in Tiananmen Square."

Mr. Graham specifically called for prayer for the students, the workers, and the government leaders that a just and non-violent solution may soon be found.

"I have received calls from Christians in various parts of the world who have been earnestly praying for China during these troubling days, and I am glad to join them in calling Christians everywhere to pray immediately and urgently for China."



**West Alexandria, Ohio** — John Darrell and Darlene Clark were ordained as deacon and deaconess in the First Brethren Church of West Alexandria on Sunday, April 23. Dr. Dale Stoffer, pastor of the Smoky Row Brethren Church of Columbus, Ohio was in charge of the ordination service.

*Reported by Luella Painter; photo by Jim Blair.*



*Rev. Robert Keplinger (l.) with Dr. Clyde Shallenberger, director of the chaplaincy service of John Hopkins Hospital, who planned the institute.*



## From The



## Grape Vine

The **First Brethren Church of Muncie, Ind.**, voted at its April 24th business meeting to have its church parking lot redesigned and paved, at a cost of \$21,527.

Members of the **Trinity Brethren Church** of North Canton, Ohio, held a reception April 30 for their new pastor, Rev. Dale RuLon, and his wife, Donna. The RuLon's son, David, a student at Ashland College, was also present. Ninety people attended the reception (a lasagna dinner), including Rev. David Cooksey (Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church) and his wife, Carolyn; Rev. William Walk (pastor of the North Georgetown Brethren Church) and his wife, Sharon; and Pastor David Ben-

shoff (of the Louisville Brethren Bible Church) and his wife, Deanna. Rev. Cooksey gave the devotions for the gathering.

An **Old Fashioned Fellowship Night** was held recently at the Cheyenne, Wyo., Brethren Church, sponsored by the Co-Workers Class (age 50 and over). Old fashioned clothes were the style for the evening, with hats for the women. Ladies sat on one side of the meeting room, gentlemen on the other, with each person paying for the pew. The speakers sat at the front, and each spoke as he felt led. The Co-Workers Class provided the special music. The service was followed by a pie social.

**Robert Norris** is the new pastor of the Raystown Brethren Church, Saxton, Pa. Pastor Norris is a licensed minister in the Church of the Brethren.

**Rev. David Stone** becomes the new pastor of the Bloomingdale Community Brethren Church of Brandon, Fla., this month. He is the former pastor of the Roann, Ind., First Brethren Church.

Members of the **First Brethren Church of Nappanee, Ind.**, will dedicate their new church building on

June 11 during a 10:00 a.m. worship service. Dr. Joseph R. Shultz, president of Ashland University and Seminary, will be the dedicatory speaker.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Jim Buick**, president of Zondervan Corporation, sent a copy of *The New International Version of the Bible*, which Zondervan prints, to Anne Gaylor, president of Freedom From Religion, an organization seeking to get Holiday Inns to banish Bibles from their hotel rooms. Buick said that perhaps Ms. Gaylor is waging a campaign against a book she hasn't read in a long time, and that she would find the new translation user-friendly.

**Evangelist Luis Palau** has received a joint invitation from leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church, the All Union Council of Evangelical Christian Baptists of the USSR, and the Autonomous Baptists of the USSR to hold evangelistic meetings in Moscow, Leningrad, Riga, and Kiev in September. Dr. Palau said that this is the first time since the 1917 revolution that the major churches of the USSR have cooperated in an open evangelistic outreach. The invitation has the approval of the chairman of the Soviet Council for Religious Affairs.

## In Memory

**Rev. Clarence Y. Gilmer**, 89, retired Brethren pastor, died April 29, 1989, in Harrisonburg, Va. He became a Brethren pastor in 1934 after working as a teacher and a high school principal in Kewanna, Ind.



He pastored the Burlington, Loree, Denver, Huntington, and Warsaw Brethren Churches in Indiana, and also the Vinco, Pa., Bryan, Ohio, Manteca, Calif., Lanark, Ill., and Mathias, W. Va., Brethren congregations. Following his retirement, he became a member of the Bethlehem Brethren Church of Harrisonburg. He also served The Brethren Church as General Conference secretary, district moderator, officer of the advisory board of National Boys' Brotherhood for 25 years, and editor of the prayer meeting topic for THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST for 20 years.

Rev. Gilmer was born January 3, 1900, in Union County, Ind. He was graduated from Manchester College (North Manchester, Ind.) in 1922 and received a master's degree in education from Indiana University. On June 2, 1923, he married the

former Zelma M. Berry, who died November 3, 1958. On May 19, 1961, he married the former Ruth Virginia Miller, who survives him. Also surviving are a daughter, Mary Elizabeth Grumbling of Flora, Ind.; two brothers, Rev. Herbert R. Gilmer of South Whitley, Ind., and Roy J. Gilmer of Ft. Wayne, Ind.; and two grandchildren.

The funeral service was conducted on May 2 at the McMullen Bridgewater Funeral Home, with Rev. Pat Velanzon and Rev. Doc Shank officiating.

**Alice Yaeger**, 84, May 12. Member for 59 years of the Masontown Brethren Church where she served as president of the Dorcas Class. Services by Pastor Russell King.

**Frank W. Merlak, Sr.**, 72, May 2. Member of the Milledgeville Brethren Church where he served as deacon and moderator. Services by Pastor Kenneth Sullivan.

**William Berkey, Sr.**, 57, April 19. Member for 30 years of the Elkhart First Brethren Church where he served on various ministries and, at the time of his death, was head usher and chairman of the Pastoral Relations Board. Services by Pastor Daniel Gray.

**Lester Leidy**, 82, April 6. Member for 45 years at the Vinco Brethren Church and for 3 years at the Johnstown Third Brethren Church. Served the local church as deacon, trustee, and Sunday school teacher and the Pennsylvania District as treasurer. Services by Rev. Jerald Radcliff, pastor of

the Johnstown Third Brethren Church, and Rev. Carl Phillips, pastor of the Vinco Brethren Church.

## Weddings

**Michele Barker to Craig Stephens**, May 20, at the First Brethren Church of Oakville; Pastor Dan Lawson officiating.

**Sally Brice to Ken Rugh, Jr.**, May 4. Pastor Gerald Barr officiating. Members of the Sarver Brethren Church.

**Elizabeth Warnken to Marcel Hutchison**, April 8, at the Milledgeville Brethren Church; Youth Minister Bill Shipman officiating. Members of the Milledgeville Brethren Church.

## Goldenaires

**Carl and Dorothy Hinkle**, 50th, June 9. Members of Mt. Olive Brethren Church.

**Emory and Margaret Hensley**, 55th, May 30. Members of Mt. Olive Brethren Church.

**Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Jenks**, 50th, April 28. Members of the Elkhart First Brethren Church.

**Joseph and Nell Bauserman**, 50th, March 20. Members of Mt. Olive Brethren Church.

## Membership Growth

**Sarver:** 1 by baptism, 1 by transfer  
**Mt. Olive:** 2 by baptism, 2 by transfer  
**West Alexandria:** 4 by baptism, 7 by transfer

# Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

## FATHER'S DAY AND OUR HEAVENLY FATHER

Father's Day is celebrated every year in the United States during the month of June. This year it is on June 18. It's a day to let our dads know just how much we love and appreciate them.

Jesus taught us to call God "our Father" (Matthew 6:9). God **is** like a father to us — loving us, providing for us, protecting us, and guiding us each moment of each day. Many moms and dads on earth today get divorced and the family has to separate. Sometimes the kids live with their mom, sometimes they live with their dad. Either way the kids feel **terrible** because they no longer share their home with BOTH parents. Parents are **not** perfect, but God promises us that He will **NEVER** leave us and that when we need Him, we only need to pray to Him, "Our Father, who art in heaven . . . ."

### God, Our Heavenly Father

- A. Using a *New International Version* of the Bible, look up the verses listed below and find in each verse a word that describes God and that fits into the allotted number of squares. "A" has already been done for you.

F — Matthew 7:11

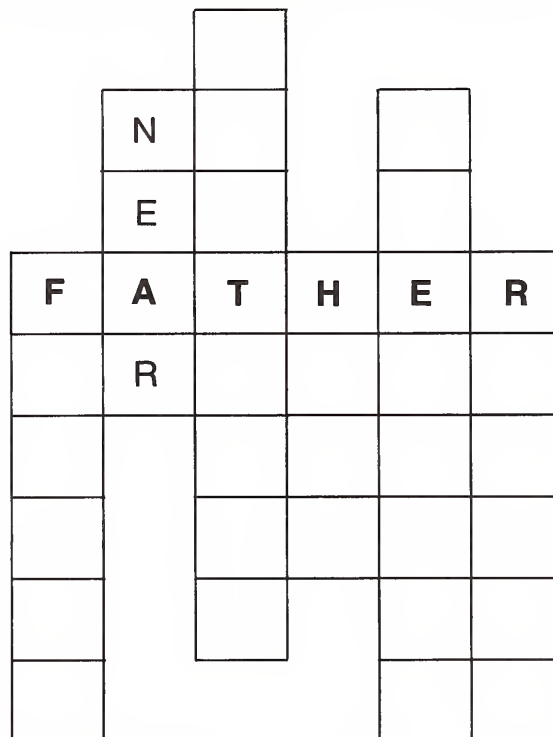
A — James 4:8

T — Psalm 18:2

H — Psalm 30:10

E — Psalm 28:9

R — Psalm 46:1



### Something Special for Dad

- B. Take a little time to do something special for your dad for Father's Day. Maybe you can polish his shoes, help him wash the car, or help him do the dishes. Be sure to tell him that you love him, and let him know that you need him to tell you that he loves you too. Sometimes dads are shy about saying, "I love you." They may think "Oh, he (she) knows I love him (her). I don't need to say it." But people need to hear those **words** too, not just know them. Remind your dad how you like to hear him say **those wonderful words**, "I LOVE YOU!"





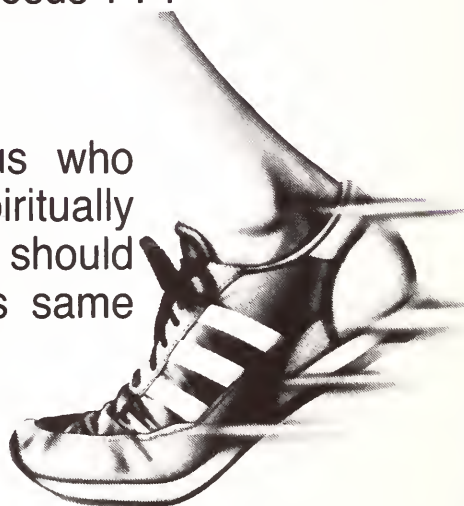
# ESPECIALLY FOR THE SPIRITUALLY MATURE



Paul says,

"I run straight toward the goal in order to win the prize, which is God's call through Christ Jesus . . ."

"All of us who are spiritually mature should have this same attitude."



If you agree, you may want to consider continued support of the **MINISTERIAL STUDENT AID PROGRAM.**

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# THE BRETHREN Evangelist

JULY/AUGUST 1989



Photos by  
Dale Tobias.

New Edifice of the  
First Brethren Church of Nappanee

See page 16.





# the salt shaker

by Alvin Shifflett

## Waiting for Prince Charming

**W**HAT if Prince Charming should come?" was the question on the bumper sticker on the car ahead of me, as I sat at a stoplight. I smiled at the thought of someone waiting for Prince Charming to come galloping out of nowhere to swoop her up and carry her off into the sunset, to live happily ever after. It makes for a nice story, but does it work in real life?

Funny, but I couldn't get the question out of my head the rest of the day: "What if Prince Charming should come?" If he really did show up, what would we do?

To be sure, since many of us are married, Prince or Princess Charming has already come. But there is more to it than that. In fact, the more I thought about it, the more I realized that everyone is looking for Prince Charming — hoping he'll show up sooner or later (and preferably sooner!).

---

***"We can't ever seem to get enough, so we vote for the lottery in hopes that Prince Charming will come in the form of a winning lottery ticket."***

---

For some, Prince Charming might be Publisher's Clearing House and Ed you-know-who with a check for ten million dollars. To others, Prince Charming might be a better job, a new home, or a golden opportunity that comes along only once in a

lifetime. In other words, Prince Charming is that lucky break in life that everyone hopes to get.

The more I thought about it, the more I realized that Prince Charming is part of the good old "American dream," which is rooted in our American lifestyle. The United States is, indubitably, the world's greatest country. But it has a tendency to make us grossly pagan. The fact is, we're like materialistic sponges. We can't ever seem to get enough, so we vote for the lottery in hopes that Prince Charming will come in the form of a winning lottery ticket.

### God has disappointed us

We've crossed over somewhere. The God of the universe — the One who created us and sustains us — has become a God who disappointed us, who did not meet our expectations. To many, the idea of Prince Charming is better than a God of disappointment.

The reason Prince Charming seems to be a better idea, even though he is a wild fling of hope, is because to some people God never was more than a blur. "The One in whom I trusted let me down," they say. Consequently, the rest of their lives is shadowed by this letdown. Even a church steeple reminds them of their melancholy conclusion: God is a disappointment!

Some, of course, rather enjoy this never-failing well of grievance. For them, years do not dim the minutest detail of their unanswered prayer or

undeserved disaster. Any hint that they should obey God or follow Christ is quickly countered by a ready reference to the perennial grievance.

Such a God — a God of disappointment — is, of course, completely inadequate. People who have convinced themselves that God has failed them find it impossible to worship or serve Him with any but a grudging and perfunctory spirit.

---

***"People who have convinced themselves that God has failed them find it impossible to worship or serve Him with any but a grudging and perfunctory spirit."***

---

God will inevitably appear to disappoint any person who is attempting to use Him as a convenience, a prop, a comfort, a "blue light special," or for his/her own purposes. But as far as I can determine, God has never been known to disappoint the person who sincerely wants to cooperate with His purposes. And you can take that to the bank.

It must be admitted, in a world like ours in which God has bestowed free will, that ills and accidents will occur. They often appear unfair because the tough, insensitive, and selfish sometimes appear to get off, while the weak and sensitive suffer.

I suppose all of us would rather have a world in which the good are rewarded and the evil are punished, as in a well-run kindergarten. But we must understand the scheme of things, that justice will not be fully dispensed until the final curtain falls on the final act. Then there'll be no more encores, as the house lights go up and the Glory World comes.

### A road to nowhere

Meanwhile, those looking for Prince Charming will continue on in perverse pleasure — blaming the God of disappointment for their perversity. But as you can see, that road leads nowhere fast. You cannot worship a disappointment. Neither can you live waiting for Prince Charming — unless, of course, your Prince Charming is the Lord of Lords and King of Kings. [†]

# THE BRETHREN Evangelist

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## Cover:

This month's cover features full-color views of the exterior and the sanctuary of the recently completed worship facility of the Nappanee First Brethren Church. This is the first time during the present editor's term of service that we have taken "Brethren" photographs and made a full-color cover from them. Other full-color covers (which we have printed from time to time) have been printed from color separations we received from an art service to which we used to subscribe. We hope to do more covers like this month's from time to time in the future.

The photographs for this cover were taken by Dale Tobias, a member of the Nappanee congregation. Mr. Tobias works as a photographer for a Nappanee area newspaper.

## Answers to Little Crusader Page:

See box at right.

R A B P E S T A U L  
O M T P E T E R E M  
M O S A S E L A J O  
A S E U T P I H O N  
N E S L H H J A U L  
A S T H E E A B I A  
C P E T R W H A R H





*It's not a barn, but the principle is the same. Here volunteers from various Ohio Brethren churches help raise a house of worship for the Smoky Row Brethren Church.*

# BARNRAISING

An old concept with a new application

By James Miller

**B**ARNRAISING — an act of love and fellowship that was common among the early Brethren — continues to be modeled for us by our brothers, the Amish. A new barn is needed. Word is spread throughout the community of faith, and fellow believers from miles around respond to meet the need. Barnraisings remain one of the most graphic illustrations of love in action, an expression of unity and concern for our brothers' needs.

Now here's the exciting part: "Barnraising" is once again becoming a vital part of the life of several denominations in their mission efforts in the United States. Teams of volunteers from across the country have caught the vision of reaching the non-churched in America and have given of their time, talents, and resources to travel to home mission areas. Their objective? To help construct church buildings.

*Rev. Miller is pastor of the Carmel, Ind., Brethren Church, a Home Mission congregation that recently completed its first church building. A number of Indiana Brethren helped in the construction of that building.*

Carpenters, carpet layers, roofers, plumbers, electricians, masons, and many other skilled and unskilled laborers have committed themselves to one or two weeks a year of "barn-raising"! Their efforts result in substantial savings for both the new church and its sponsoring mission board, a savings which frees both to focus on future ministry rather than on indebtedness.

Rev. Buck Garrett, pastor of the Dutchtown Brethren Church in Indiana, has seen just such a group of "barnraisers" in action. "My cousin's church, the Tuttle Baptist Church in Oklahoma, was totally constructed by these volunteer work crews," he reports. "They built a \$350,000 church for \$95,000! My cousin was so excited by what happened at her church that both she and her husband volunteered for a team to go elsewhere and help out."

Teams visit for a week at a time until their work is finished, basically saving the church all but the cost of materials. Generally husbands and wives travel together, the women helping on the building where they are able, or with the cooking. Team members pay their

own transportation, and the church provides lodging and meals for them while they are at the building site. Every evening the workers are free to go sightseeing or to fellowship with one another.

The response of these volunteers also provides a genuine witness to the community. "One man came by to see what was going on at the building site, and he heard about all the people that had come from around the country to help. Well, he was so impressed, he asked how he could help! He was the owner of a bulldozer and ended up clearing off some of the land for them."

In the Book of Acts it says that the early believers had everything in common and that they enjoyed the favor of all the people. These modern "barnraisings" have reembodyed that testimony of oneness in Christ.

The question is, "Could The Brethren Church do the same?"

The answer is an emphatic "Yes we can!" It is in our very nature as Brethren to respond in this way. All it would take is for committed, willing people to catch the sense of mission of planting Brethren churches in the United States, and to donate

time and effort to seeing it become a reality. Buck Garrett says, "We could build two or three churches for what it costs to build one now just on what would be saved."

At General Conference a proposal will be brought before the Laymen to challenge them to this mission. Other information will be sent directly to your church. Pray that God would open *your* heart to this



*From start to finish, a considerable amount of volunteer Brethren labor went into the construction of the Smoky Row Brethren Church building in Columbus, Ohio. Above, Don Rusk, a contractor from the Brethren Church in New Lebanon, and his work crew lay the foundation blocks. At left, Bob Merrick, the hired carpenter (far l. in the photo), and four volunteers from the Gretna and Park Street Brethren Churches set beams for the sanctuary. Below, even after the exterior of the building was completed, volunteers continued to help with the finishing work inside.*

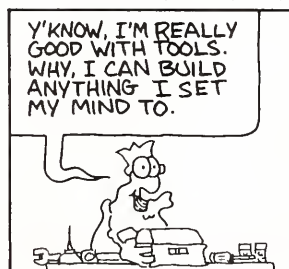


ministry opportunity. The Brethren Church needs barnraisers! How will you respond? [†]

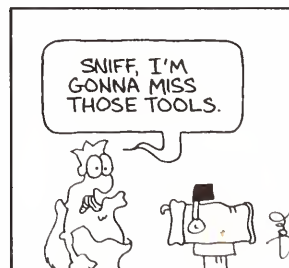
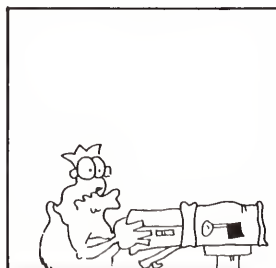
**Editor's note:** As the pictures on this page and the experience at the Carmel Brethren Church show, the "barnraising" concept for building church structures is not new in The Brethren Church. But thus far these efforts have been hit and miss, with only a few people involved. What Rev. Miller is proposing is an organized program with a large pool of committed volunteers.



## Pontius' Puddle



**Editor's note:** If you are really good with tools, you don't need to take those tools halfway around the world (or send them either!) in order to do something important with them. As the article on these two pages explains, you can use your tools to help construct church buildings for Brethren Home Mission congregations.





# Sharing the Light

By Sharon Walk

**I** OFTEN WALK around in our house in the dark. I'm convinced I can see well enough by the light from the moon and stars that filters in through the windows.

One night I went into our teenage daughter's room. She makes things more difficult for me by closing her drapes when she goes to bed. I needed something from her closet. If her room is picked up, the way is normally clear. That day, however, she had moved her desk directly into the way. I was startled when it suddenly loomed in my path. Fortunately, I saw it before I hurt myself on it. Turning on a light would have eliminated the problem.

## Light dispels darkness

God made light to dispel physical darkness. God calls us, His children, to dispel the spiritual darkness around us. That's why Christians are in the world.

Before we can dispel darkness, however, we need to know people who have not received Jesus as Savior and Lord. A lot of Christians do not know many such people. Before I got a job in the secular world, I could count on one hand the people I knew who were not Christians.

We are not doing anyone any good huddled in our churches. We meet for Bible study, prayer meeting, worship, and many other events. These are all good things, which we

need to be doing in order to learn how to pass on the message of Christ. But as long as that's *all* we are doing, we aren't helping anyone, nor are we fulfilling the mission God gave us.

I'm not an outgoing person. I don't talk easily to people I don't know well. When we move, my children get acquainted with our neighbors first. Then, maybe I learn to know them. I've justified my behavior by telling myself that I was teaching my children. I had to be put into a position where I was forced to learn to know non-Christians.

Once you move out where darkness abounds, you have to learn to function. At first, I hated my new position. The swearing bothered me most. I tried everything I could to escape, but the Lord firmly blocked all my attempts. I learned eventually to like working there.

I've missed lots of opportunities to speak out for the Lord. Sometimes I chose to be silent when I should have spoken. Other times I simply didn't know what to say, so I said nothing. I pray that God will give me other chances.

## God has called us to care

God has called us to care when people hurt. He calls us to listen when people want to talk. Studies have shown that many who seek professional counseling only need someone who will listen. We show we care by being interested in people and their families. Often a simple question will lead someone to share a load of grief and pain with you. The key is to be interested and available. Often the only ability God needs of us is availability.

Most people sitting in church in the United States on Sunday morning have never led anyone to Christ. They wouldn't know where to begin. God expects us to know enough Scripture to lead another person to Him. You can't send for your pastor when the person beside you at work expresses an interest in Christ. If you're not prepared, now is the time to get ready.

Last summer at church camp, I was appalled to find out how ignorant of biblical truths our senior high young people are. These were kids who have grown up in our churches and who have gone to Sunday school most of their lives. The teacher threw out crisis situations and the campers were supposed to come up with Bible verses that would help a person in such a situation. They were not allowed to use their Bibles as a reference. They came up with very little.

How many of us could offer help from the Bible to people in situations like these? Two engines of the plane you're on suddenly lose power. You are the first person at an accident scene and are faced with an injured child and a hysterical mother. Your best friend's teenage daughter is pregnant. Someone you know has been seriously injured by a drunk driver.

People all around us are facing these kinds of problems. They need help. God has called each of us to help others in whatever crisis they face.

"You are the light of the world," Jesus said. "Let your light shine before men so that they see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven." [†]

---

*Mrs. Walk is a member of the North Georgetown, Ohio, Brethren Church, where her husband is the pastor. She is employed as a sales person at a discount store. This article grew out of a devotional she presented at a Northeast Ohio W.M.S. rally.*

# APOLLOS of Alexandria

By LaVonne Hutcheson



**A**S I WAS WALKING the path-  
way of Bible study recently, I  
met someone unfamiliar to me. He  
aroused my curiosity, so I decided to  
get better acquainted with him.

As I followed where this man led,  
I wanted to share my experiences.  
So let me introduce to you my new-  
found friend, Apollos of Alexandria.

"Who's he?" you ask. Turn with  
me to Acts 18:24. There we learn  
that he was a Jew, a Jew special  
enough to be mentioned by name in  
the Scriptures.

"Where's he from?" might be your  
second question. Isn't that typical?  
That's usually one of the first things  
we ask about a stranger.

"From Alexandria in Egypt," I  
reply, as we follow that Scripture  
passage along.

"Egypt!" you exclaim. "Years ago  
Moses led the children of Israel out  
of Egypt. What's this one doing back  
there?"

My curiosity got the better of me.  
I had to find out. How did this Jew  
get back into Egypt?

This time my path led me to the  
library, and to an encyclopedia.  
There I discovered some interesting  
historical facts about Alexandria. By  
the time of Apollos, a contemporary  
of the Apostle Paul, Alexandria of  
Egypt was already an old metropol-  
is. It had been founded by Alex-  
ander the Great more than 300  
years earlier, in either late 332 B.C.  
or 331 B.C.

When Alexander the Great in-

vaded Palestine in 332 B.C., he  
showed great consideration to the  
Jews. He spared Jerusalem and of-  
fered immunities to any Jews who  
settled in Alexandria.

After Alexander's death, the Ptol-  
emaic kings of Egypt remained consid-  
erate of the Jews and allowed them  
to construct synagogues in their set-  
tlements. In time, Alexandria be-  
came an influential center of Juda-  
ism. By the first Christian century  
one-fourth to one-third of the city's  
600,000 inhabitants were Jews.

## An eloquent speaker

Out of that background comes  
Apollos, a Jew from Alexandria.  
This man was no dummy. The Bible  
says that he was an eloquent man —  
a fluent, persuasive speaker. He was  
also mighty in the Scriptures, in-  
structed in the way of the Lord, and  
fervent in spirit. Someone had  
trained Apollos well. Was it his par-  
ents? Grandparents? Jewish families  
had been taught to teach their chil-  
dren at all times (Deut 11:19), and  
this young man was a product of  
such teaching. Of course, he had to  
be willing to be taught, but that was  
the kind of young man he was.

Our next question: What did this  
man Apollos do that made him so  
important? God's word tells us that  
he went to Ephesus and began to  
speak boldly, fluently, and persua-  
sively in the synagogue about Jesus  
Christ. But one thing was wrong. He  
knew only the baptism of John, not  
the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

But the Lord was ready. He had  
Priscilla and Aquila there waiting.  
They were willing to become in-  
volved in this young man's life, and  
they had had enough experience

with the Apostle Paul to know how  
to teach this young man "the way of  
God more perfectly" (Acts 18:26).  
And they did it.

The next thing we hear of Apollos  
of Alexandria is that he is in  
Achaia, "helping them which had  
believed through grace" (18:27).  
There he used his eloquence and his  
knowledge of God's word to refute  
the Jews in public debate and to  
prove to them from the Scriptures  
that Jesus was the Christ.

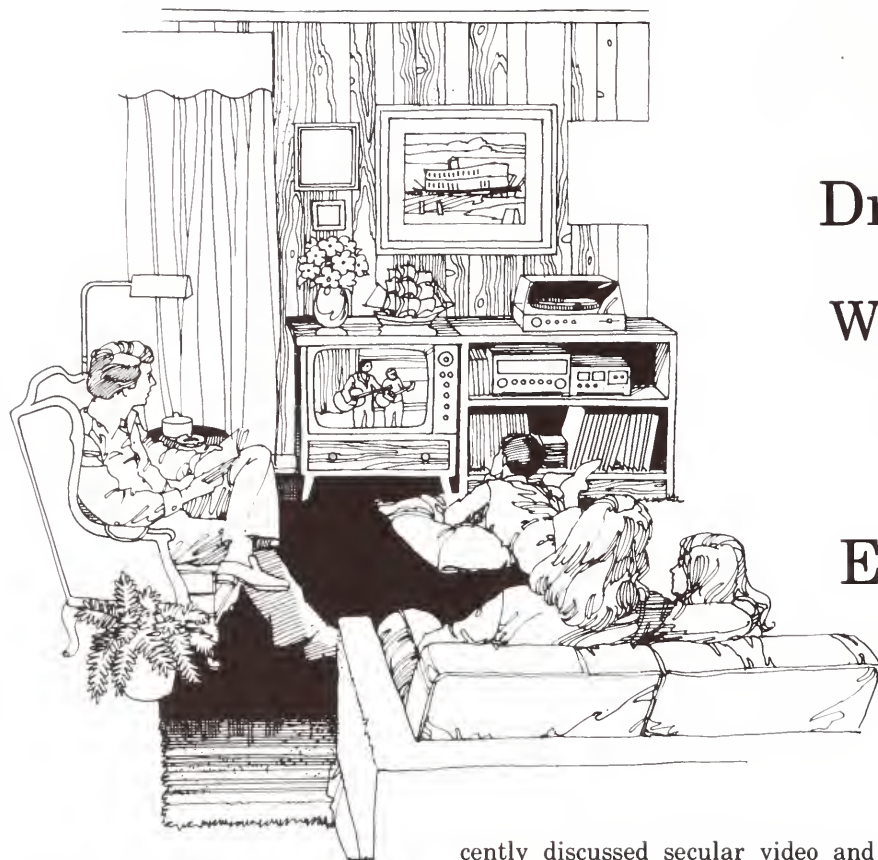
Follow me now, if you will, in your  
Bible to I Corinthians 3:4-6. Apollos  
had become known to Paul by this  
time, and he had served as one of  
the preachers in the Corinthian  
churches. Priscilla and Aquila would  
have been proud of him now. He had  
become their Timothy. They had  
taught him the way of the Lord  
more perfectly than he had known it  
before and had sent him forth with a  
new message. Paul said, "I have  
planted, Apollos watered, but God  
gave the increase" (I Cor. 3:6).

As we continue this personality  
portrait, we find Apollos back in  
Ephesus (I Cor. 16:12). This verse  
gives us a peek into his personal life.  
Paul wanted Apollos to accompany  
the brethren back to Corinth, but  
Apollos had a will of his own. (Don't  
we all?) Apollos did not want to go  
at that time, but he promised to re-  
turn later.

We can learn some important les-  
sons from this young Jew from  
Alexandria, Egypt! He left home  
knowing only part of the truth, but  
he shared what he knew. He was  
willing to be taught, and humbly  
learned from others. Then he went  
forth and became an effective minis-  
ter for the Lord. [†]

*Mrs. Hutcheson (Strine) is a retired  
librarian who lives in Kingsley, Iowa.  
She grew up in the Elkhart, Ind., First  
Brethren Church and is a 1941 graduate  
of Ashland College.*





# Drugstore Video:

## Will it be the new

## "Christian"

## Entertainment?

by Ken Anderson

**A** CHRISTIAN FATHER in Minneapolis stopped by the corner drugstore one evening on his way home from work.

"On an impulse," he told me, "I went over to the video rental counter and decided to pick up something to view with the family after dinner."

He selected a story about an orphaned boy and a man who wanted to befriend him.

"We found the video quite interesting," the man said, "similar in some ways to films we used to see at our church."

But then came a sequence in which the boy's benefactor asked him if he had ever experienced sex. When the boy told him he had not, the kind gentleman promptly escorted him to a brothel for supervised introduction to the subject.

"I was so shocked," the Christian father told me, "it took a moment before I could pick up the remote and turn off the VCR!"

Unfortunately, this is not a rare anecdote on the subject. When I re-

cently discussed secular video and its impact on the Christian home with the executive vice-president for a prominent publisher of Sunday-school materials, he said, "Ken, I'm afraid all of us in media are just seeing the beginning of the kind of secularization hitting today's Christian families."

He reminded me, for example, that — in a recent decade — Sunday school attendance in evangelical churches declined by nearly fifteen million!

"It's just part of the change we're seeing in the spiritual entity of the Christian family," he added.

As a producer of church-related audio-visuals for over forty years, I am witness to the continuing syndrome of changing attitudes toward what we all knew for many decades as Christian films.

Several prominent audio-visual (AV) distributors have gone out of business or contemplate doing so. The throng of talented young directors has thinned drastically. A first-rank producer of some of the finest quality motion pictures recently closed its studio. Our own volume has plummeted to where we now endeavor to function with one-third of our former staff.

What happened?

AV-makers on my side of the aisle might be tempted to fault the church and the deteriorating quality of America's Christian families.

But that is much too simplistic, and unfair.

I began work in church-related AV's during the days of pioneer producer C. O. Baptista — a name remembered only by older evangelicals. I wrote and directed a couple of motion pictures for Mr. Baptista.

"The films we make must have only one purpose," he insisted, "and that is to give a message straight from the Bible. Christian films are to be instruments of ministry, not vehicles for entertainment."

Poorly produced though those early films may have been, they reached thousands with the gospel. I was privileged to sit in Mr. Baptista's office and see tears streaming down his cheeks as he related reported conversions numbering in the hundreds from the use of his motion pictures.

The years immediately following World War II saw the sudden proliferation of Christian films. Documentaries from overseas, dramatic productions from shoe-string budgets to studio spectaculars, became available to the evangelical church.

*Mr. Anderson is the founder and president of Ken Anderson Films, which produces Christian films and videos.*

## ***"Just as an alert congregation features a church library, procuring books of interest to all members of a family, so why not now do the same with Christian video?"***

Available, to be sure, though at first many churches took second and third hesitant looks at the new phenomena.

"Fortunately," one pastor told me, "we have a fellowship hall where we can show films." He added, "Unfortunately, it can't always handle the crowds, but we have a firm policy against showing movies in the sanctuary."

Many pastors, evangelists, and Bible teachers spoke out against all motion pictures — including so-called Christian films — as tools of Satan.

"If we begin showing movies in our church," one sincere pastor declared, "it'll be the first step toward compromise. Who knows, one day, after I'm gone, they may be having dances!"

### **Resistance softened**

Little-by-little, however, resistance softened. Churches began using films. Then many embraced them as a new and wonderful tool for evangelism and discipleship. Also, of nearly equal importance to some, the announcing of a film for Sunday night meant, in many churches, attendance far in excess of normal Sunday night patronage.

Then, too, organizations like Youth for Christ made Christian film shows the logical alternative to Saturday night theater attendance by community young people.

This continued for many years. Our own organization grew by upward annual percentages, making possible the production of many films — including missionary outreach through production and free distribution overseas.

Then came the advent of the video cassette! Plus the discontinuance, in many churches, of regular Sunday evening services.

Volume of film rentals began a downward trend which has not yet normalized.

Promptly, many of our compatriot producers plunged into the distribution of videos. To the surprise of all

of us, however, churches did not respond as they had done when Christian films first appeared.

Why?

Let me try to assess for you what I see as the status quo in the development and use of evangelical projected media.

Our own organization struggled, for years, to develop the Christian motion picture, not in competition with Hollywood or television, but as an instrument of its own entity. "The Message Is Always First" became our slogan.

Many pastors caught our vision and used the films not just as entertainment, but as tools of ministry.

"We think of you as members of our staff," one pastor wrote. "The effectiveness of our ministry is greatly enhanced by the impact of your films."

But others continued using films for variety, as a means of clean entertainment, to fill out a schedule, and — hopefully — to draw a crowd. One pastor called to tell us he had laryngitis and had decided to darken the sanctuary so he could show our film, *In His Steps*, on Sunday morning.

There is also another factor.

For many years, Christians looked askance at Hollywood films because of their moral variables. And, as we all know, Hollywood productions yesterday were all but exemplary compared to today's PG releases!

When television arrived, it primarily featured family-oriented entertainment.

### **Television "came of age"**

Then television "came of age," as media moguls like to put it. Concerned, some Christians put television out of their homes. But far more Christians began sampling the salty new fare. And sampling, to the lament of many concerned pastors, led to a steady diet!

The solution?

Make home viewing fare part of the total ministry of the local congregation!

Forgive me, please, if I now sound like a salesman. My deepest motivation — for over forty years — is to be in partnership with the local pastor. The economics of our ministry, we try to assure, are compatible with the concerns of the finance committee in any evangelical congregation.

### **Christian video libraries**

Just as an alert congregation features a church library, procuring books of interest to all members of a family, so why not now do the same with Christian video?

Why not establish a Christian video library in the local evangelical church, shepherded by the pastor or his appointee, expedited by a librarian and, perhaps, overseen by a standing video committee.

Promote the library from the pulpit, in the weekly bulletin, during Sunday school. Promote home video viewing weeks. Possibly feature testimonies from pleased parents.

In our own case, we have family-tested a number of our videos. One mother told us her daughter watched, thirty times and more, each of the children's dramas we loaned to her. A Christian father reported, in amazement, how his daughter invited in children of the neighborhood to view an evangelistic story.

Our ministry envisions helping local lay people produce video cassettes within their own congregations for viewing by a variety of audiences. We hope to host, annually, seminars geared to training church members in this kind of effort.

Why not consider the video ministry potentials in your congregation? Do some poll-taking among members, learning about present VCR viewing practices and the potential of using Christian video in the homes of people whose spiritual growth is your concern.

We must not — dare not — let the corner drugstore take over, by default, the video cassette options of families for whom the local church is responsible! [†]





# Jesus Is Lord

"... that in everything He might  
have the supremacy" (Col. 1:18).

By Moderator Kenneth L. Sullivan

**M**Y YEAR as moderator is almost at its end. I have learned many things from the privileged time I spent with the General Conference Executive Council (GCEC). I have come to appreciate the work which is required of those who serve on the national level. Until you spend time with those involved, it is difficult to understand the hours that are required to carry out the ministry of our denomination. Those in the national office often put in hours beyond what is reasonably expected, and many times return to the office in the late evening hours.

I have developed an added respect for the commitment to our Lord displayed by every person who serves in the national office or on GCEC. Each in his or her own way seeks to submit to Christ's Lordship — individually and corporately always desiring our Lord's will in everything that is done.

These are people of integrity and spiritual depth who deserve the respect and support of every individual and church in the denomination. They display a love for our denomination demonstrated by sacrificial giving of their time and resources. These are people who share honestly with each other, who support and are accountable to one another, and who work toward a common goal of shaping the future of our church. They truly love the Brethren.

I am indebted to these people for

their labor of love, loyalty to our church, and submission to Christ. The sharing of their work, ideas, concerns, hopes, and dreams has made this year a success. I am thankful for their commitment to the time, travel, meetings, and work of GCEC.

## Thanks to specific individuals

Specific individuals need to be thanked. Thanks to Dale Stoffer for his counsel and continued leadership; to Mary Ellen Drushal for her expertise in leading GCEC through the process of reorganization; to Ron Waters for his display of leadership and creativity, which has made such a difference in so short a time.

Thanks to Mike Drushal and Warren Garner for their aid in making sure that the details of running General Conference are in place. Thanks to all in the national office, executives and personnel, who work behind the scenes to keep things functioning and in order. Thanks to each GCEC member for your service to our church. Thanks to the districts and local churches for your loyalty to this denomination and your support for those of us who serve you.

I would like to thank my church, the Milledgeville Brethren, for their support and loving care during my time as moderator. Their understanding of the obligations of this office and their willingness to free me for this service have made my work much easier. They have truly made

my time with them a pleasure and a joy. May God bless them as they have blessed me and my family.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife for her moral support and encouragement during these past months. She is a true "helpmate" who provides a dimension to my life for which I will always be grateful. Thanks to my children for tolerating my absence from the home and their delight upon my return.

## Prayers for Conference

As you prepare for General Conference, be thankful for those whom God has placed in leadership, and remember that they labor on your behalf and out of love for our Lord. Uphold them in your prayers, asking God to strengthen and encourage them in their work. Commit yourself to supporting them with your encouragement, your prayers, and your finances.

Pray for those who will bring the messages of inspiration at Conference — John Perkins, Brian Moore, James F. Black, Ron Waters, and me. Pray for godly wisdom that you may respond in accordance with our Lord's will regarding the business of our church. Pray for a spirit of unity, a oneness of vision, a singleness of purpose, obedience to God's Word, and a leading of His Spirit.

Pray that our submission to the Lordship of Christ will be evidenced in all that we do or say during Conference week. Pray that we will allow Jesus our Lord to display His supremacy in every aspect of what we are as Brethren. Pray that each of us will come to Conference with the desire to set aside ourselves in order that Christ alone may be the center of all that we do.

Come, let us worship together the One who "is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy" (Col. 1:15-18, NIV). [†]

# The 101st General Conference of The Brethren Church

**Theme: "Jesus Is Lord!"**

Colossians 1:18

August 7-11, Manchester College, North Manchester, Indiana

**T**HE LORDSHIP of Jesus Christ will be the focus when Brethren gather August 7-11 for the 101st General Conference of The Brethren Church. This Conference will be unique in that for the first time ever it will be held at Manchester College in North Manchester, Ind. Since Manchester College is located within easy driving distance of a number of Indiana Brethren churches, a large turnout from the Indiana District is expected, particularly for evening sessions.

At the helm of the Conference will be Rev. Kenneth Sullivan, this year's moderator. Conference week will be the whirlwind conclusion of what has been an extremely busy year for Moderator Sullivan, a year that began with the sounding of the final gavel at last year's Conference.

During the year he planned for and presided over the meetings of the General Conference Executive



*Moderator Kenneth Sullivan*

Council (GCEC), conferred frequently with other members of the "moderator track" (past moderator and moderator-elect), wrote a monthly column for this magazine, sat on a search committee to find a Director of Brethren Church Ministries, attended and spoke at the various district conferences, was in frequent phone conversation with the Brethren Church offices in Ashland, and, at the same time, tried to carry on his pastoral duties.

As if this were not enough, he also made a pastoral change during the year. He *(continued on next page)*

## Conference Schedule

### **Monday, August 7**

- 7:00 p.m. Family Worship Hour
- 9:00 p.m. Fellowship/Reception

### **Tuesday, August 8**

- 9:00 a.m. Moderator's Address by Rev. Kenneth Sullivan
- 10:00 a.m. Opening Business Session
- 12:15 p.m. GCEC Luncheon: "Ministry of Discipleship"
- 2:15 p.m. Auxiliary Sessions
- 3:30 p.m. Workshops
- 3:30 p.m. For Pastors Wives: "Pleasure and Privilege of Parsonage Living," led by Grace Radcliff and Carolyn Cooksey
- 5:30 p.m. Seminary Banquet
- 7:00 p.m. Evening Worship; Address by Dr. John Perkins
- 8:45 p.m. Fellowship in The Oaks

### **Wednesday, August 9**

- 8:30 a.m. Auxiliary Sessions
- 10:15 a.m. Inspirational Session; Address by Dr. John Perkins
- 11:00 a.m. Business Sessions
- 12:15 p.m. GCEC Luncheon: "Ministry of Outreach"
- 1:30 p.m. Bus Tour
- 6:00 p.m. Crusader Review

### **Wednesday, August 9, continued**

- 7:00 p.m. Evening Worship; Address by Dr. John Perkins
- 8:45 p.m. Fellowship in The Oaks

### **Thursday, August 10**

- 7:30 a.m. Pastors' Wives Breakfast
- 9:00 a.m. Inspirational Hour; Address by Rev. Brian Moore
- 10:00 a.m. Business Session
- 12:15 p.m. WMS Luncheon
- 12:15 p.m. Laymen, Men, and Boys Picnic
- 2:15 p.m. Auxiliary Sessions
- 3:30 p.m. Workshops
- 3:30 p.m. For Pastors Wives: "Share and Prayer Session," led by Grace Radcliff
- 5:00 p.m. Missionary Board Banquet
- 7:30 p.m. Evening Worship; Address by Rev. James F. Black
- 8:45 p.m. Fellowship in The Oaks

### **Friday, August 11**

- 7:30 a.m. General Conference Commissions Meetings
- 9:00 a.m. Inspirational Hour; Address by Rev. Ronald W. Waters
- 10:00 a.m. Business Session
- 12:15 p.m. Conclusion of Conference



(continued from previous page)

began the Conference year as pastor of the Trinity Brethren Church in North Canton, Ohio, and concluded the year as pastor of the Milledgeville, Ill., Brethren Church (making the transition in January).

Rev. Sullivan will deliver his moderator's address during the nine o'clock session on Tuesday morning and moderate the business sessions on Tuesday through Friday mornings. He will also share in the leadership of other sessions during Conference, as well as carrying out the various other responsibilities of moderator during the week.

## Keynote speaker, Dr. John M. Perkins

Dr. John M. Perkins, an international-known speaker, writer, and Christian activist who champions the rights of the poor and oppressed, will be the keynote speaker for this Conference. Born into a sharecropper's family in New Hebron, Miss., Dr. Perkins is now president of the John M. Perkins Foundation for Reconciliation and Development and president of Harambee Christian Family Center, both of which are located in Pasadena, Calif., and both of which he founded. He is



Dr. John M. Perkins also founder and president emeritus of Voice of Calvary Ministries in Jackson, Miss.

Though a third grade dropout, Perkins has honorary doctor's degrees from three colleges and has lectured at over 150 colleges and universities in the U.S. and around the world, including Stanford, Harvard, and the University of Berlin. He is the author of numerous magazine articles and several books, among them *Let Justice Roll Down, With Justice for All*, and his most recent, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*.

Since 1951, Dr. Perkins has been married to Vera

## General Conference Preview

Mae Buckley. They have eight children.

Dr. Perkins will be bringing three messages to the Conference. He will speak during the seven o'clock worship services on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings and during the 10:15 inspirational service on Wednesday morning.

## Brethren inspirational speakers

In addition to Dr. Perkins, three Brethren pastors will bring inspirational messages during the Conference. The three will be exploring three facets of the Conference theme, with one giving a historical perspective on the Lordship of Christ, another looking at the Lordship of Christ in its present application, and the third exploring how the Lordship of Christ relates to the future of The Brethren Church.

**Rev. Brian Moore**, senior pastor of the St. James Brethren Church, will present the first of the three messages during the morning inspirational session at nine o'clock on Thursday. A 1967 graduate of Ashland Theological Seminary, Rev. Moore served the Glenford, Ohio; Pittsburgh, Pa.; Derby, Kans.; and Ardmore (South Bend), Ind., Brethren Churches before assuming the pastorate of the St. James Brethren Church in 1983.

The second of the three messages will be delivered during the seven o'clock worship service on Thursday evening by **Rev. James F. Black**, pastor of the Gretna, Ohio, Brethren Church. While a student at Ashland Theological Seminary, Rev. Black managed The Carpenter's Shop, the Brethren bookstore in Ashland. Following his graduation from seminary in June 1984, he became pastor of the Gretna Church in August of that same year.

The last of the three messages will be given Friday morning during the nine o'clock inspiration session by **Rev. Ronald W. Waters**, the new Director of Brethren Church Ministries. A 1985 graduate of Ashland Theological Seminary, Rev. Waters served The Brethren Church in various capacities at the denominational level, then pastored the Mt. Olive Brethren Church near McGaheysville, Va., from 1985 to 1989. He assumed his new office in June of this year.

## GCEC-Sponsored Conference Luncheons

The General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) is sponsoring luncheons on Tuesday and Wednesday of Conference week. These will be "working" luncheons, with the program of each focusing on one of the two ministries that will be a part of the new denominational organization.

The Tuesday luncheon will have as its theme "Seek to Know the Lord," and will take a look at the Ministry of Discipleship. Following an introduction by the moderator or moderator-elect and a brief devotional by Rev. Ronald W. Waters, those attending the luncheon will have the opportunity to interact at their tables by sharing ideas for goals and ministry areas for

each of the four commissions that will make up the Ministry of Discipleship. The luncheon will conclude with attenders sharing their thoughts on what divine gifts are most needed by The Brethren Church.

The theme for the Wednesday luncheon, which will look at the Ministry of Outreach, will be "Practice What You Know." The format will be much the same as for the Tuesday luncheon, with Rev. Phil Lersch giving the devotions and attenders sharing ideas on the work of the four commissions that will be a part of the Ministry of Outreach. The program will conclude with a brief evaluation of the luncheons and a concluding hymn.

## W.M.S. Sessions

"Jesus Is Lord — Rooted in Him" (Col. 2:7) will be the theme of the W.M.S. sessions at General Conference, to be held in Cordier Auditorium. Devotions will be presented by Mrs. Dolly Zerbe, the Indiana District W.M.S. president. A theme song co-written by Mrs. Zerbe and Janein Emily (of the Huntington, Ind., Brethren Church), and put to music composed by Mrs. Zerbe's son, Steve, will be used during the week.

Leading the singing will be Nancy Hunn, a member (and wife of the pastor) of the Warsaw, Ind., First Brethren Church. Pianist will be Mrs. Roberta Gilmer, a member (and pastor's wife) of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church.

The Tuesday afternoon (2:15) session will feature a challenge by W.M.S. national president Donna Stoffer and special music by sisters Julie Slabaugh Shiefer of the Lanark, Ill., First Brethren Church and Jill Slabaugh Stone of the Bloomingdale, Fla., Community Church (both married to pastors). The business session will include the election of officers.

The Wednesday session, scheduled for 8:30 a.m., will include special music by Mrs. Pat Lusch of the Huntington, Ind., Brethren Church, a Memorial Service led by the Burlington, Ind., W.M.S., and additional business.

Linda Mirante, who (with her husband) runs the Joy Christian Bookstore in Wabash, Ind., will be the speaker for the W.M.S. luncheon on Thursday. Roxie Stahl of the Huntington, Ind., First Brethren Church will give devotions, and Loretta Fanning of the Tucson, Ariz., First Brethren Church will present special music, playing the bells. The W.M.S. Project In-gathering will be received, with the Elkhart, Ind., W.M.S. in charge.

The concluding session at 2:15 Thursday afternoon will include special music from the Florida District, the Thank Offering cared for by the W.M.S. of the Johnstown, Pa., Third Brethren Church, and an installation service for the 1989-90 officers.

## Elders' Sessions

The Brethren Retirement Fund will be the focus of the Tuesday Conference session of the National Association of Brethren Church Elders. Fund representatives will be on hand to report and to field questions.

BYC Moderator Mark Ray will address the elders during the Wednesday morning session. The rest of the time will be given over to business.

The pastors will join the Laymen and boys for a picnic during the lunch hour Thursday, followed by a joint session with the Laymen. Then during their own session at 2:15 p.m., they will present memorials for recently deceased members, elect officers, and care for other items of business.

## Laymen's Sessions

A Brethren pastor will speak at each of the National Laymen Organization (NLO) sessions at General Conference, which will be held in Room 100 of the Science Building.

Rev. Leroy Solomon, pastor of the Winding Waters Brethren Church of Elkhart, Ind., will bring the message on Tuesday afternoon. Dr. Michael Gleason, pastor of evangelism and discipleship at the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, will speak Wednesday morning. And Rev. Buck Garrett, pastor of the Dutch-town Brethren Church, Warsaw, Ind., will address the men during the Thursday afternoon session.

Each session will also include business, conducted by NLO president DeWayne Lusch, and a project ingathering. An important item of business will be the proposed new constitution, to be discussed on Wednesday and put to a vote on Thursday. The Thursday session will also include a memorial service conducted by retired elder Rev. Woodrow Immel.

In addition to their regular sessions, the Laymen will have a picnic lunch at 12:15 p.m. Thursday on the Student Union terrace, during which they will be joined by pastors and boys. This will be followed by a joint session of Laymen and pastors, at which Rev. Duane Dickson, pastor of the Huntington Ind., Brethren Church, will speak on "Men With a Mission." Laymen achievement and goals awards will also be presented during this session.

## Conference Banquets

Two banquets will be held during Conference week.

Ashland Theological Seminary is sponsoring a Tuesday evening banquet (5:30 p.m.). Program details were not complete by press time, but Seminary Vice President Fred Finks said that the banquet will highlight the work of the seminary and emphasize the calling of individuals to Christian ministry.

A Thursday evening banquet (5:00 p.m.) is being sponsored by the Missionary Board. Rev. Russell Gordon, the new director of Home Missions and Church Growth, will be the speaker. Special recognition will be given to Malayasian missionaries David and Jenny Loi, who will be attending the Conference, and to the Mark and Chantal Logan family, who are terminating their service in Colombia, South America.

Conference attenders who purchase one of the meal or housing/meal packages will receive banquet tickets as part of the package. Others may order tickets using the order blank in the June EVANGELIST.

### Brethren Publishing Company Annual Corporation Meeting

The annual corporation meeting of the Brethren Publishing Company will be held Thursday, August 10, 1989, during the 10:00 a.m. (CDT) business session of the General Conference of The Brethren Church. The meeting will be held in Cordier Auditorium, Manchester College, North Manchester, Ind. Delegates to the General Conference constitute the membership of the corporation.

Alvin Shifflett, secretary.



## Brethren Youth Convention

"SHINE ON! You are the Light of the World!" will be the theme of the Brethren Youth Convention, to be held on the Manchester College campus in conjunction with the adult General Conference.



Matthew 5:14-16  
National BYC Convention  
August 7-11, 1989  
North Manchester, Indiana

Following a Monday afternoon Mudfest (grubby clothes and tennis shoes required!) and a joint worship service with the adults, the Convention will officially get underway Monday evening with the BYC Kick-Off. This event will feature a message by BYC Moderator Mark Ray (member of the Milford, Ind., First Brethren Church, 3rd-year crusader this summer, Ashland University sophomore next fall), and a pizza party sponsored by the North Manchester First Brethren Church.

Each day, Tuesday through Friday, will include a youth morning worship service, a business session, share groups, and (Tuesday through Thursday) evening worship with the adults. In addition, each day will have its own special events.

Special events planned for Tuesday are workshops, Bible activities, and the big event, a concert by Christian singer Ray Boltz.

Two of Wednesday's special activities will take

youth away from the Manchester College campus — an afternoon of swimming, recreation, and fellowship at Quaker Haven, or (for those who so choose) a bus tour of Brethren historical sites in northern Indiana.

Youth will return to the college campus by late afternoon for the ever-popular Summer Crusader review, then, following evening worship, round out the

day with a Coffeehouse. This will feature a sharing of gifts and talents (drama, creative writing, music) and the annual Moderator's Cup presentation to the top BYC group of the year.

Thursday's special events will be much like Tuesday's, with workshops and Bible activities. The day will conclude with the spiritual highlight of the week, the Youth Communion Service.

*Christian singer Ray Boltz will present a concert Tuesday night.*

On Friday, following morning worship and a business session, the convention will come to a close with a Farewell Fellowship.



## General Information

Since Conference is being held at a new location this year, many things are bound to be different. At times we may feel a bit bewildered, and undoubtedly each person who attends will experience some temporary inconvenience. Nevertheless, this new experience can bring a breath of fresh air into our Conference, if we are open to it. So come to Conference with an open mind, a patient attitude, and a sense of humor, remembering that the only way we can ever have done it this way before is by doing it this way for the first time.

**Housing:** Housing will be in Manchester College dormitories, located near the College Union (see the college map on the back cover). The housing desk will be located in the lobby of Cordier Auditorium (hours 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. daily). Housing registration forms were printed in the June EVANGELIST (p. 14). "Package" deals that include room and meals in one price are available for those staying all week (four or five nights).

**Meals:** Meals will be served in the cafeteria in the College Union. As noted, room "packages" include all meals. For those who plan to stay off-campus but who want to eat at the college, meals-only packages



*The main Conference sessions and the W.M.S. sessions will be held in Cordier Auditorium, a large, attractive, air-conditioned assembly hall with theater-style seats.*

are available for the week. Both the meals-only and housing-meals packages include regular meals plus luncheons and banquets. Persons not purchasing a package can still reserve rooms for one or more nights and purchase individual meals at the cafeteria. Some "non-package" luncheon and (continued on next page)

# General Conference Workshops

An important part of General Conference each year are the workshops, which deal with a wide range of topics on a practical level. This year will be no exception.

Twelve workshops on eight different subjects are scheduled for Tuesday and Thursday afternoons at 3:30. Three of these are two-part workshops, with a session on Tuesday and a follow-up session on Thursday. They are:

*Religion Under Gorbachev: Open Window or Window Dressing?* led by Clyde Weaver and sponsored by the Peace Committee.

*Probing for Prospects*, led by Rev. David Oligee and sponsored by the Evangelism Committee. (See the ad below for a description.)

*Sowing Seeds: Making Jesus' Parable Alive Among the Brethren*, led by Rev. Ken Hunn and sponsored by the Evangelism Committee. (See the ad below for a description.)

One of the workshops will be given on Tuesday and then repeated on Thursday. It is *Faith Promise*, given by Rev. Bob Westfall and sponsored by the Missionary Board.

Workshops scheduled only for Tuesday are:

*How to Attract and Equip Youth on a Local Level for the Purpose of Service and Outreach*, led by Larry Lance and sponsored by the Board of Christian Education.

*Evaluating the Bible Study Book on Abortion Prepared by the Social Concerns Committee*, sponsored by the Social Concerns Committee.

Workshops scheduled only for Thursday are:

*Reviewing and Selecting Your Sunday School Curriculum*, led by Mrs. Alberta Holsinger and sponsored by the Board of Christian Education.

*CALM — Church Administration for Leadership and Management*, sponsored by Ashland Theological Seminary.

## General Information

(continued from previous page)

banquet tickets will also be available. See the registration form in the June EVANGELIST.

**Credentials:** Delegate credentials will be received in the lobby of Cordier Auditorium. The credential desk will open Monday at 2:00 p.m. and be open each morning and evening throughout the week. *Non-delegates* are also asked to register at the credential table and pay a fee of \$5.00. Each non-delegate will receive a name badge and a Conference packet and be entitled to use the college facilities.

**Camping:** Arts Country Park, two miles east and two miles south of North Manchester offers electric and water hookups, showers, and flush toilet facilities, \$7.50 per night (two or more nights). Call 219-982-4790 for reservations.

**Child care:** Care for children two years of age and under will be morning and evening sessions.

Advertisement

## EVANGELISM WORKSHOPS AND RESOURCE MATERIAL

Sponsored by the General Conference Evangelism Committee

Are you looking for ways to begin or enhance your **visitation ministry**?

Do you need to sharpen your **personal evangelism** skills?

Are you looking for resources to strengthen your annual **revival meeting**?

If you answered "yes" to one or more of these questions, then you should consider attending one of the following 1989 General Conference Workshops and also purchasing the book described below.

WORKSHOPS

### "Probing for Prospects"

This workshop, led by Pastor Dave Oligee of the West Alexandria First Brethren Church, will assist your local church in reaching both the "out of church" members and the unchurched. The focus of the workshop will be practical, providing workable ideas — some basic, others unique — for developing a growing visitation ministry. The seminar will be given on both Tuesday and Thursday of Conference week.

### "Sowing Seeds"

#### "Making Jesus' Parable Alive Among the Brethren"

In this workshop, Pastor Ken Hunn of the Warsaw, Ind., First Brethren Church will lead participants in discovering how our Lord's parable of the sower can be used as both a personal and a church-wide strategy for soul-winning. Practical suggestions and strategies will be offered to help increase your evangelistic potential. Time for questions and discussion will also be provided. The Tuesday session will focus on "The Sower and the Seed"; the Thursday session on "The Sower and the Soil."

\* \* \* \* \*

RESOURCE BOOK

### "Planning, Preparing, and Preserving Evangelism and Revival Services in the Local Church"

This book by Dr. J. Ray Klingensmith presents practical, down-to-earth suggestions for planning and conducting evangelistic meetings and for conserving the results of those meetings. The final chapter describes the office, role, and function of the evangelist. Available for \$2.00 each at General Conference or by mail from the Brethren Publishing Company, 524 College Avenue, Ashland, Ohio. (When ordering by mail, add 65¢ per book for postage.)





*Nappanee Brethren at worship in their new sanctuary on dedication day.*

### Nappanee First Brethren Dedicates New Church Building on June 11th

**Nappanee, Ind.** — Members and friends of the Nappanee First Brethren Church joined together on Sunday morning, June 11, to dedicate the congregation's new church building.

Dr. Joseph R. Shultz, President of Ashland University and Theological Seminary, delivered the dedicatory address, entitled the "Seven Thunders of God." Dr. Alvin Shifflett, pastor of the church, led the litany of dedication and offered the dedicatory prayer.

Others participating in the service included Richard Best, deacon and member of the building committee, and Merle Holden, chairman of the finance committee. Lee Holdeman played the organ prelude, and Carol Strang sang "We Shall Behold Him."

The new edifice, which is located on a five-acre plot north of Nappanee at the corner of State Road 19 and County Road 52, is constructed in the form of two wings at right angles to

one another. The west wing holds a sanctuary that seats 400, eight classrooms, and a choir room. The east wing houses an activity center with a rubberized, 84- by 48-foot playing floor, a multi-purpose room, a large kitchen, a sewing room, two storage rooms, a janitor's room, and a stage.

The vertex of the angle formed by the two wings contains a large narthex, a classroom, a nursery, and two restrooms. Just off the narthex are located the Sechrist Memorial Library, the pastor's office, a secretary/receptionist area, and two additional offices.

The structure, which contains over 24,000 square feet, was built by Ideal Construction Company at a cost of \$750,000 (which includes the cost of the land). The building committee for the new structure was J.B. Stillson (chairman), Richard Best, Maryellen Best, Joanne Bowers, Mary Crowe, Jim Clouse, David Deisch, Brien Hall, Erle Hunsberger, Peg Hunsberger, Pat Johnson, Michael Mathews, Don Miller, and Pastor Alvin Shifflett.

This is the third church building of the Nappanee Brethren congregation. The first, built at the corner of Locke and Walnut Streets at a cost of approximately \$3,500, was dedicated February 28, 1897. That building burned to the ground on February 13, 1945, and was replaced by another structure on the same site, which was dedicated in 1948. The congregation met in this structure until January 1 of this year, when the first worship service was held in the present building. The former building has been sold to the Living Gospel Church.

### Russell Gordon Joins Mission Bd. Staff As Dir. of Home Missions/Church Growth

**Ashland, Ohio** — Rev. Russell C. Gordon joins the Missionary Board staff this month as Director of Home Missions and Church Growth.

He will be a full-time employee, replacing Rev. William Kerner, who is retiring after serving the past two years on a part-time basis as Supervisor of Home Missions.

Rev. Gordon (47) grew up in South Bend, Ind., where he attended Central High School and was a member of the Ardmore Brethren Church. Following high school, he attended Ashland College.

He was ordained in 1967 and served Brethren pastorates in Williamstown,

Ohio (1963-68); Fort Scott, Kans. (1968-74); and Bradenton, Fla. (1974-June 1989).

In addition to his years at Ashland College, he attended a number of training courses on



*Rev. Russell Gordon*

evangelism and church growth. He served on the Missionary Board from 1973-76 and from 1979 to the present. He has been active in district church work, served two years as moderator of the Midwest District and one year as moderator of the Florida District, and served on the National Ordination Council three years.

Rev. Gordon is married to the former Sherrie Humphrey, and they have two sons, Ryan (23) and David (20).

At least half the murders in the United States and Canada can be attributed to the influence of television on impressionable youth, according to Brandon Centerwall, a University of Washington researcher.

— AFA Journal

## Garber Brethren Church Dedicates New Addition and Remodeling Work

**Ashland, Ohio** — The Garber Brethren Church held a dedication service on Sunday morning, June 11, for construction and remodeling work done on the church building during the past several years.

Rev. Herbert Gilmer, pastor of the church in 1983 when the remodeling began, brought words of greeting and challenge to the congregation during the service, as did Rev. Russell King, pastor from 1984 to 1987, during the construction phase. Rev. Bill Kerner, moderator of the congregation, and Rev. Ralph Gibson, the current pastor, led the litany of dedication. Rev. Smith Rose, interim pastor from 1987 to 1989, gave the dedicatory prayer.

Special music for the service included a vocal solo by Kelly Kroft and a vocal selection by Evelyn Gilmer, Janice Rowsey, and Marty Weaver. The latter was the revival of a trio that had sung together during the pastorate of Rev. Gilmer.

The remodeling work on the building began in 1983, when the direction

of the sanctuary was reversed. This change created a need for a new entrance, so an addition was made to the building. This addition contains an entryway and fellowship area upstairs



Ashland Times-Gazette photo; used by permission.

*The Garber Brethren Church building with the new addition at the right.*

## Brethren at Hillcrest Pitch Horseshoes for World Relief

**Dayton, Ohio** — A horseshoe-pitching tournament was one small part of efforts expended in April and May by members of the Hillcrest Brethren Church to raise money for World Relief.

The tournament took place at a cookout sponsored by the Genesis Sunday school class and held at the home of Russ and Phyllis Blanchard. Par-

ticipants in the tournament breathed a sign of relief when they learned that Dan Miller, an honest to goodness horseshoe-pitching champ, would be unable to participate because his trick knee was acting up. With him out of the running, the competition was won by Mr. and Mrs. Hershel Winfield.

In addition to horseshoes, some fairly wild games of croquet, badminton, and a card game called golf were played during the cookout.

The Hillcrest Brethren also used soup can banks (with labels and plas-

tic lids provided by the World Relief Board) as a means to collect money for World Relief. These were distributed in April, then collected in May. As a result of their various money-raising efforts, the Hillcrest Brethren raised around \$500 for World Relief.

— reported by Pastor Wes Ellis

## Oakville Church Cuts Ribbon To Open Remodeled Offices

**Oakville, Ind.** — Members of the Oakville First Brethren Church held a ribbon-cutting ceremony May 21 for their newly remodeled pastor's study, secretary's work area, and church library.

Given the honor of cutting the ribbon were Kermit Cross, a deacon and the oldest member of the church present for the ceremony, and Dr. Dan L. Lawson, pastor of the congregation.

In addition to the remodeling work, new carpet, wall coverings, light fixtures, and library shelves were installed, and new office furniture was purchased. Also, new insulated windows were installed in the back part of the building.

The total cost of the project was approximately \$12,000, with an area contractor doing the remodeling work.

— reported by Nancy Reese



*Hershel and Bertha Winfield seem almost breathless with excitement over the championship trophy they won in the horseshoe-pitching tournament. The Genesis class of the Hillcrest Church lavished practically no expense on the trophy.*



## Thomas Schiefer Ordained an Elder May 28th at Lanark First Brethren

**Lanark, Ill.** — Thomas E. Schiefer was ordained an elder in The Brethren Church and his wife, Julie, was consecrated the wife of an elder in a service held May 28 at the Lanark First Brethren Church, where Rev. Schiefer serves as pastor.

Dr. Jerry Flora, professor of New Testament Theology at Ashland Theological Seminary, gave the message for the service. Other Brethren elders participating were Rev. Lynn Mercer, Rev. Henry Wilson, Rev. David Cooksey, Rev. Ken Sullivan, Rev. Bill Shipman, Rev. David Stone, and Rev. Donald Rowser. Wives of Brethren elders present also took part, laying hands on Mrs. Schiefer during the prayer of consecration for her.

Others participating in the service



*Rev. and Mrs. Thomas Schiefer*

were Bob Michael, moderator, Steve Hollewell, vice-moderator of the Lanark Church, Bob Guenzler, chairman of the church's pulpit-pastoral

committee, and Emerson Iske, chairman of the deacon board. Musicians were Mrs. Bonnie Bauer, Mrs. Ruth Fouts, and Mrs. Marsha Green. Special music was presented by Bryan Hardacre.

Rev. Schiefer, son of Mr. and Mrs. Norman Schiefer, was born February 12, 1956, near Bucyrus, Ohio, where he attended Wynford High School. He grew up in the United Methodist Church, but joined the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church while a student at Ashland College. Following graduation from Ashland (Bachelor of Music, 1979), he spent two years as director of music at Crestline Schools in Crestline, Ohio.

In 1981 he returned to Ashland to attend Ashland Theological Seminary. While there, he worked part time as music instructor at Ashland Academy, then as assistant director of bands at Ashland College. Following seminary graduation (M.A., 1985), he taught music two years at Wynford High School in Bucyrus before accepting a call to the Lanark First Brethren Church in 1987.

In August 1979, Tom and Julie (Slabaugh) of Goshen, Ind., were married. Julie, a 1981 graduate of Ashland College (B.S. in Education), worked as secretary, then as administrative secretary in the national office of the Board of Christian Education from 1978 to 1983. The Schiefers have three children, Kimberly (7), Bethel (5), and Laura (1½).

## Milford Member Crowned Senior Queen of County

**Milford, Ind.** — Dorothea Kerlin, a member of the Milford First Brethren Church, on May 24 was crowned Senior Queen of Kosciusko County.

Earlier this year, Mrs. Kerlin was chosen to be the 1989 queen of the town of Milford, succeeding another Milford member, Elsie Ulrich, who was the 1988 Milford queen. Mrs. Kerlin then went on to win the county title.

Mrs. Kerlin, who turned 90 last September 19, has been a member of the Milford First Brethren Church since February 8, 1908. The church has been the number one priority of her life, and she still is present for nearly every meeting, teaches a Sunday school class regularly, and attends W.M.S. meetings faithfully. Several years ago (when she was only in her eighties!) she wrote a carefully researched history of the first 100 years of the Milford Church, which was published in 1983.

For 47 years Dorothea served as librarian at the Milford Public Library. She was so active in this role that the children's section of the library is named the Dorothea Kerlin Children's Library. She also served for a number of years as a correspondent to several Indiana newspapers.

In addition to her professional and church life, Dorothea was married for 25 years to Charles Kerlin, who died nearly nine years ago. Although



*Dorothea Kerlin is crowned queen by fellow Milford Church member Elsie Ulrich.*

Dorothea had no children, Charles had a daughter. So she is a stepmother to one, stepgrandmother to two, and a stepgreat-grandmother to seven.

— reported by Judy Tinkel



**West Alexandria, Ohio** — The West Alexandria First Brethren Church celebrated "Annie Miller Day" June 11 in honor of the 101st birthday of its oldest member. Annie was honored by about 90 people at a carry-in dinner following the morning worship service. Annie is shown with two of the many flower arrangements she received for her birthday. According to reporter Luella Painter, Annie is a remarkable and beautiful person who loves the Lord.

Photo by Luella Painter.

## "Pursue Love" is District Theme At Indiana Inspirational Conference

**Shipshewana, Ind.** — "Pursue Love," based on I Corinthians 14:1, was the theme of the Indiana District inspirational conference held June 9-10 at the Brethren Retreat near Shipshewana.

This was the first of two district meetings planned for 1989. A district business conference is scheduled for Saturday, September 16, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Warsaw First Brethren Church.

Moderator Ken Hunn presided over the two-day gathering and presented an address Friday evening. Pastor Hunn examined the passage from I Corinthians 12:31 through 14:1, focusing particularly on chapter 13, the "love chapter." He asked the conference to consider this question: "What would happen among the Brethren of the Indiana District if we made it our single endeavor to pursue God's love in all our relationships?"

Rev. Hunn noted that discovering and using our spiritual gifts is vitally important in order for God's work to be accomplished — it is "an excellent way. But Paul says there is a **most** excellent way — it is the way of love . . . and love never fails." Moderator Hunn will present specific recommendations regarding the theme to the September business conference.

General Conference Moderator Ken Sullivan presented the keynote address Friday morning, using the theme verse as the basis of his message. Pastor Sullivan offered the following as a definition of Christian love: "It is the deliberate external response toward another person that eventually results in an internal quality." Pastor Sullivan also emphasized that for love to be pursued, it must involve another person; that God is the source of true love; and that love must be "ministry-active" — affirming the other person.

Ronald W. Waters, Director of Brethren Church Ministries, delivered the concluding address entitled "The Three Chairs," based on II Timothy 1:1-7. The theme of his message was that "if we are to pursue love, we must pursue the One who was love personified, the Lord Jesus Christ." He used three chairs to illustrate three levels of response to Christ. Chair One represented the fully committed person; Chair Two, the person in a state of compromise; and Chair Three, the person in conflict with God and callus in his/her relationship with Him. His challenge was for each person to answer the question: "In which chair am I sitting?" and he encouraged each to

move to Chair One.

Though no business was conducted, the district ministerial association overwhelmingly affirmed the call of Rev. Gene Eckerley to become the District Elder. Rev. Eckerley will devote one-quarter time to this task, in addition to his ministry as pastor of the Ardmore Brethren Church. (See related article on this page.)

The conference concluded with an uplifting series of roving interviews with individuals attending the conference by Moderator Ken "Phil Donahue" Hunn. The interviews included prayers for new ministries, affirmation of new developments in several churches, and innovative approaches to ministry.

— Ronald W. Waters

## Member of Gretna Church Wins State Wrestling Championship



Dean Jenkins

**Bellefontaine, Ohio** — Dean Jenkins, a member of the Gretna Brethren Church, recently won the Ohio Division II State Heavyweight Wrestling Championship.

Dean, a four-year letterman in wrestling and this year's team captain, went undefeated at 36-0 for the year. He was also selected as all-league tackle during the 1988 football season.

Not only is Dean a fine athlete, but he also is a fine student. With a G.P.A. of 3.54, he ranked 20th in a class of 150 students at Indian Lake High School. He is a member of National Honor Society and student council, and was selected to be a delegate to Buckeye Boys State.

Dean, the son of Dave and Andi Jenkins, is actively involved in the life of the Gretna Brethren Church. He sings in the High School Ensemble, participates as a worship leader, and serves as a leader of B.Y.C.

Dean plans to pursue an engineering degree at Ohio State University. He will also take part in the university's wrestling program, with hopes of trying out for the 1992 Olympic Team.

— reported by Pastor James F. Black

## Rev. Gene Eckerley Accepts Call to Serve Part Time as Indiana's First District Elder

**South Bend, Ind.** — Rev. Gene Eckerley, pastor of the Ardmore Brethren Church of South Bend, has accepted a call from the Ministry of Pastoral and Congregational Care of the Indiana District to serve part-time in the new position of District Elder.

As District Elder, Rev. Eckerley's responsibilities will include maintaining contact with district pastors and congregations, meeting with each pastor to provide encouragement and support, encouraging pastoral candidates, serving as a resource person for pastors' retreats and seminars, and training pastors and congregations in maintaining biblical relationships.

Rev. Eckerley will continue to serve the Ardmore congregation, with the District Ministry of Pastoral and Congregational Care purchasing a part of his time from the church. The Ardmore congregation plans to employ a part-time pastoral assistant to help

with the church's local ministry.

A native of Indiana, Rev. Eckerley (45) graduated from Noble Township High School in Wabash County in 1962, then attended Moody Bible Institute, Fort Wayne Bible College, and Winona Lake School of Theology. Before coming to the Ardmore Brethren Church in 1983, he pastored the Tiosa, Ind., First Brethren Church from 1964 to 1968, and the Pleasant Hill, Ohio, First Brethren Church from 1968 to 1983.

In addition to his pastoral responsibilities, he served both the Ohio and Indiana Districts as moderator, organized and was president of the Miami County Evangelical Ministers Fellowship in Ohio, and has served on various boards in both the Ohio and Indiana District.

Rev. Eckerley and his wife, Judy, have two sons, Timothy (22), and Jared (19).



## Smoky Row Honors Pastor and Wife With Surprise Appreciation Day

Columbus, Ohio — June 4 was "Dale and Marcia Appreciation Day" at Smoky Row Brethren Church in Columbus.

On that day the congregation held a surprise picnic luncheon following the worship service to express their appreciation to Pastor Dale Stoffer and his wife, Marcia, for the nine years of devotion and hard work they have given the church since its founding.

Led by the Fellowship Ministry, the congregation planned the celebration in great secrecy for several weeks. Invitations were sent to everyone in the congregation, to former members, and to Dale's and Marcia's families.

The Fellowship Ministry chose June 4 because a baptism was scheduled for that afternoon. The family of one of the baptismal candidates invited Dale and Marcia for lunch to ensure that they would make no other plans.

Somehow, the congregation managed to keep the secret until the day of the luncheon. An unusually large



*Shelly Moorehead (l.) presents a collection of "romantic" gifts to Pastor Dale and Marcia Stoffer (behind).*

number of people attended worship that morning, including several out-of-town guests. Dale's parents arrived unannounced, reporting later they knew the luncheon was still a surprise

when Marcia told them she didn't know what arrangements to make for them for lunch.

The congregation was in a festive mood — the worship leader had some difficulty calling them together for worship. While the rest of the congregation began the service, some set up tables on the church grounds. (Since the church's tables are kept in a storage area in front of the sanctuary, special tables had to be brought in and stored in the barn on the church property so they could be set up secretly.)

The worship service proceeded normally until the final hymn, at which point several people in the congregation began whispering back and forth. Dale and Marcia realized then that something was up. When the hymn concluded, Gale Shireman announced the "Appreciation Day."

On behalf of the congregation, she presented Dale and Marcia with a gift certificate for a weekend away and money to use for a splurge. She informed them that they were forbidden to do any work that weekend or to appear in church. Shelley Moorehead presented the Stoffers with a collection of small gifts suitable for a romantic weekend. The congregation had arranged to provide childcare and to cover the worship service for any weekend they chose.

After a prayer, the congregation adjourned to the picnic lunch outside. Along with the food and fellowship, Stoffers received personal notes of appreciation from members of the congregation.

— by Brenda B. Colijn

## Skit for Children Makes Hit At Newark Brethren Church

Newark, Ohio — "Edith Ann" and "Mary Jane Fackelmeyer" are making a hit at the Newark Brethren Church.

Edith Ann (based on Lily Tomlin's "Edith Ann") and Mary Jane Fackel-

meier are roles portrayed by Peggy Cole (r.) and Pat Starkey respectively. They have also appeared at a local nursing home, and they presented the program for the Mother-Daughter Tea in May. They were "dumped off" at the tea by their moms, who were on their way to work. They arrived wearing their Blue Light Special dresses,



*Peggy Cole (r.) and Pat Starkey — making a hit as "Edith Ann" and "Mary Jane Fackelmeyer."*

meyer are roles portrayed by Peggy Cole and Pat Starkey respectively. The two women play the parts of five-year-old friends trying to cope with church, adults, and life in general. Edith Ann understands things better and is frustrated by Mary Jane's fun philosophy and lack of faith.

Edith Ann and Mary Jane present

which their mothers had bought for them at the local K-Mart.

Both Mrs. Cole and Mrs. Starkey are members of the Worship Ministry at Newark. They conceived of Edith Ann and Mary Jane as a creative way to add interest to the children's talks during the worship service.

— reported by Pastor Stephen Cole

## Charles Munson Awarded Honorary Degree by ATS

Ashland, Ohio — Dr. Charles Munson was awarded an honorary doctor of divinity degree May 20 by Ashland Theological Seminary (ATS) during the seminary's graduation ceremony.

Dr. Munson, who was also the speaker for the com-

mencement service, is a graduate of ATS (B.D., 1952) and has taught at the semi-

(continued on next page)



# Corinth Brethren Church Celebrates Centennial Year with Awesome April

Twelve Mile, Ind. — "Awesome April" was the theme of a month-long special emphasis at the Corinth Brethren Church, which culminated in "Friend Day" on April 30.

Awesome April and Friend Day were part of the Corinth Church's 100th anniversary celebration, which got underway back in January. On January 31, two very important people in the life of the church — Raymond Morrow and Nila Staller — were honored for their service to the Lord and His church.

Mr. Morrow had served as church moderator for nine years and felt it was time to step aside for a period of rest and restoration. He provided some key leadership for the church during his years as moderator, and the congregation took this opportunity to remember and to express its appreciation for his important ministry.

Nila Staller was honored for her years of ministry as children's Sunday school teacher, pianist (for Sunday school, worship hour, and adult choir), and local WMS president, and for her service in other areas of church life. The congregation also bid her farewell, as she was being transferred by her employer to Wisconsin.

With the arrival of spring, the Corinth congregation scheduled a variety of special events in April to set the stage for Friend Day on the 30th.

April 2 was Farm Dedication Sunday, and full-time, part-time, and retired farmers gathered at the altar to dedicate their farms and their work to the glory of God during 1989.

April 9 was "Jogging Shoe Sunday," to emphasize that the Corinth Church is "off and running" to reach its community for Christ. Jogging shoes were the footwear of the day, and were worn by the youngest to the oldest.



*Raymond Morrow and Nila Staller — honored for their service to the Lord and the Corinth Brethren Church.*

Special recognition was given to Denny Moss for wearing the oldest shoes and to Cody Scott for the newest; to Janet Patchett for the cheapest shoes and to Jason Wray for the most expensive. Also recognized were Frances Beckley for the holey-est shoes; Brent Moon for the most colorful; and Zack Williams, Andy Williams, and Brian Moon for the dirtiest (a dubious honor!).

During the week that followed, young and older got a chance to use those jogging shoes, as they prepared for "Kids Versus Adults Sunday." On that Sunday, April 16, the group with the smaller attendance had to provide special music for the worship service.

Apparently the children put their jogging shoes to better use inviting friends and neighbors to Sunday school than did the adults, for even though the adults normally outnumber the children two to one, on

that Sunday there were 50 children and only 44 adults. The children relished their victory as they listened to the adults, under the direction of Sunday school song leader George Staller, sing "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus" and "Jesus Loves Me" during the worship hour.

Sunday April 23 was preparation day for Friend Day. All those committed to attending the following Sunday and to bringing friends along constructed a blue and yellow paper chain. When it was completed, the chain was over 15 feet long.

When the Big Day finally arrived, the sanctuary was decorated with banners made by Sunday school classes, the pulpit was draped with the blue and yellow chain, and the building was supplied with extra pews to make room for those who might come. And come they did — 177 people in all! More than double the church's average attendance, and the highest Sunday morning worship attendance in the 100-year history of the congregation. Only the dedication service of the remodeled church building in 1922 saw a larger crowd.

During the worship service, members eagerly introduced their guests to the church family during the recognition time. Special music was provided by Charlie and Shirley Martin and by the adult church choir under the direction of Jean Grable. And Pastor Bill Brady spoke on the Friend Day theme, emphasizing that the church today has a message from God to offer our friends next door and around the world. Following the service, the congregation gathered for a group photograph of the record-setting crowd.

As the Corinth congregation continues its centennial celebration, special events are scheduled throughout the year. If you are in the area, the Corinth Brethren invite you to drop in and help them celebrate their 100 years of ministry.

— reported by Pastor Bill Brady



*Part of the record-breaking crowd that attended the Corinth Brethren Church on Friend Day.*



## From The



## Grape Vine

**Myron S. Kem**, a member of the Hillcrest Brethren Church, Dayton, Ohio, was presented an honorary Doctor of Laws degree by Ashland University on May 13. A student at Ashland College in 1924-25, Mr. Kem has served on the school's board of trustees since 1944 and was president of the board from 1946 to 1976. He has provided the college wise counsel and generous support over the years.

**Three Brethren students** were among the 90 men and women who received degrees May 20 from Ashland Theological Seminary. **Robert L. Nugen**, a member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, received an M.A. degree in pastoral psychology and counseling. He served the Park Street Church as youth director from 1987-88, and is currently working for a counseling center in Columbus, Ohio. **Gregory A. Page** received the Master of Divinity degree. He is pastor of the Fremont, Ohio, First Brethren Church. **Thomas**

### Dr. Charles Munson

(continued from previous page)

nary for the past 35 years, also serving several of those years as dean.

In addition to his degrees from the seminary, Dr. Munson has a B.A. degree from Ashland University (1947); a master of theology degree from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (1954); and a Ph. D. degree from Case Western University (1971).

He has served The Brethren Church as pastor (Williamstown and Gretna congregations), National Youth Director, General Conference moderator, and on various district and national boards and committees.

He has also been a much sought-after speaker for Bible conferences, evangelistic services, family life conferences, and youth gatherings.

He and his wife, Aida May, have been married for 47 years and have two daughters — Bonnie of St. Petersburg, Fla., and Deborah (Vick) of Stuttgart, Germany.

**Saunders**, a member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, likewise received the Master of Divinity degree. He has been accepted as a candidate for Brethren missionary service in Mexico.

**Six members** of The Brethren Church (all members of the Park Street Brethren Church of Ashland) were among the 826 students who received degrees from Ashland College on May 13. **Jean McPherson Shultz** (Mrs. John) received a Master of Education degree. **Glenn R. Black** (son of Rev. and Mrs. James R. Black), **Nyla Joe Nye Kaiser** (Mrs. Steve), and **Gary Lee Schaefer** all three received

Bachelor of Arts degrees. **Melinda Lou Rinehart** (daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Don Rinehart) received a Bachelor of Science in Education degree, *cum laude*. And **Holly Moore Finks** (Mrs. Fred) received a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree, *cum laude*.

*Brethren missionaries Dr. Juan Carlos and Maria Miranda will be among the more than 4,000 Christian leaders from 190 countries expected to participate July 11-20 in the second International Congress on World Evangelization in Manila. (An article about the congress appeared on page 21 of the May EVANGELIST.)*

## In Memory

**George Ted Beal**, 80, June 17. Member for 60 years of the Masontown Brethren Church, where he served as Sunday school teacher (20 years), S.S. class president (22 years), deacon, and moderator. Services by Pastor Russell King.

**George L. Walls**, 78, June 13. Member of the Vinco Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Carl H. Phillips.

**Alvin E. Brown**, 76, June 12. Lifetime member of the Waterloo First Brethren Church, where he served on the trustee board and as chairman of the Pastoral Relations Committee. Services by Pastor Lynn Mercer.

**Wilma Lockhart**, 87, June 8. Member since 1946 of the Bryan First Brethren Church, where she served as pianist for many years. Services by Pastor Mark Britton and Rev. Marlin L. McCann.

**Lucile Overholt**, 85, June 7. Charter member of the Jefferson Brethren Church. Services by Pastors Kerry L. Scott and Bryan G. Karchner.

**Angeline Johnson**, 76, June 3. Member of the Valley Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Bill Yoder.

**Mary Helen Reschke**, 60, June 3. Member of the Falls City First Brethren Church, where she served as church organist and pianist, Sunday school teacher, junior superintendent, and head of nursing home ministries. Services by Pastor Curt Nies.

**Nellie Bessemer**, 100, May 31. Charter member of the Jefferson Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Kerry L. Scott.

**Barbara C. Darling**, 95, May 26. Member for more than 50 years of the Ardmore First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Gene Eckerley.

**Ruth Staggs**, 75, May 26. Member for many years of the Denver First Brethren Church. Services by Rev. George Hapner.

**Mary E. Shank**, 86, May 23. Member of the West Alexandria First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor David Olgee.

**Edna C. Price**, 54, May 7. Member of the Milledgeville Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Kenneth Sullivan.

## Weddings

**Michele Johnson** to **John Walker**, May 21, at the Gratis Brethren Church; Pastor Darrell Crissman officiating. Bride a member of the Gratis First Brethren Church.

**Alanea Cornell** to **Scott Eckstein**, June 10, at the Vinco Brethren Church; Pastor Carl H. Phillips officiating. Members of the Vinco Brethren Church.

**Jennifer Stone** to **Grant Showalter**, May 20, at the Sarasota First Brethren Church; Rev. David Stone, brother of the bride, assisted by Dr. J.D. Hamel, officiating. Members of the Sarasota First Brethren Church.

**Jan Eisentrout** to **Steve Shaffer**, June 24; Pastor Robert Payne officiating. Members of the Icard First Brethren Church.

## Goldenaires

**Lavon and Mary Dale**, 55th, July 28. Members of the Ardmore First Brethren Church.

**George and Wilma Bunn**, 60th, July 9. Members of the Waterloo First Brethren Church.

**Jacob and Helen Mackall**, 50th, June 28. Members of the Vinco Brethren Church.

**Raymond and Mae Rodgers**, 55th, June 26. Members of the Vinco Brethren Church.

**Richard and Margaret Graehling**, 50th, June 18. Members of the Milledgeville Brethren Church.

**Rev. Vernon and Marge Grisso**, 50th, June 10. Members of the Tucson First Brethren Church.

**Rev. Smith and Florence Rose**, 50th, June 8. Members of the Garber Brethren Church.

**Bob and Lucille Kerr**, 50th, June 2. Members of the Bryan First Brethren Church.

## Membership Growth

**Flora**: 4 by baptism

**W. Alexandria**: 2 by baptism, 1 by transfer



# Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).



## GOD'S LAWS AND HUMAN LAWS

Every summer our country celebrates Independence Day on the Fourth of July. This is a day when we show how happy we are that we live in a country where we have much freedom.

As Americans, most of us are proud of our country. But as Christians we must **never** forget that we are God's people and belong to His kingdom. We must obey God's laws and do what He wants us to do. The Bible tells us what God's laws are, and the Holy Spirit helps us obey them.

Christians live in many different countries around the world. Each of those countries has its own laws, and Christians should obey those laws. But **all** Christians live under God's laws first. Christians are usually good citizens in whatever country they live. But sometimes a Christian finds it necessary to **disobey** the laws of his or her country in order to **obey** God's laws.

This is what happened to Daniel in the Old Testament. The king of the country in which Daniel was living made a law that no one should pray to any god or king other than King Darius (the king of that country) for 30 days.

Daniel knew that this law was wrong and that he should pray only to God. Daniel wanted to obey God. Therefore he continued to pray anyway, even though he knew that he would be punished for doing so. Because of this, Daniel was thrown into a den of lions. Do you know what happened? If not, find the Book of Daniel in your Bible and read verses 13-26 in chapter six.

God's people today must likewise sometimes disobey their countries' laws. In some countries it is against the law to tell another person about Jesus. Some Christians in those countries disobey such laws, because they know Jesus has said that we should tell everyone about Him.

Some Christians hide people from other countries because they know that the government of that country wants to kill those people. Many times the government wants to kill them because they have tried to change things that are wrong in the country.

In our own country, some Christians have tried to keep women who are going to have babies from going to abortion clinics, where those babies will be killed before they are born. They know that God has said that all human life, no matter how small, is important.

Christians who break the law know that they will probably be punished for doing so, just as Daniel was punished. They are afraid. But God gives them courage to obey Him. They also find help by reading in the Bible the many, many stories of people who faced great danger, even death, because they obeyed God rather than other people.

### Some People in the Bible Who Faced Danger Because They Stood Up for Their Faith in God

Find the verses listed below in your Bible and read how these persons faced danger. Then find their names in the word search.

PETER (Acts 12:1-5)

R A B P E S T A U L

PAUL (Acts 16:16-24)

O M T P E T E R E M

RAHAB (Joshua 2)

M O S A S E L A J O

ELIJAH (I Kings 19:9-18)

A S E U T P I H O N

MOSES (Exodus 17:1-7)

N E S L H H J A U L

ESTHER (Esther 4:10-17)

A S T H E E A B I A

STEPHEN (Acts 6:8-15; 7:54-60)

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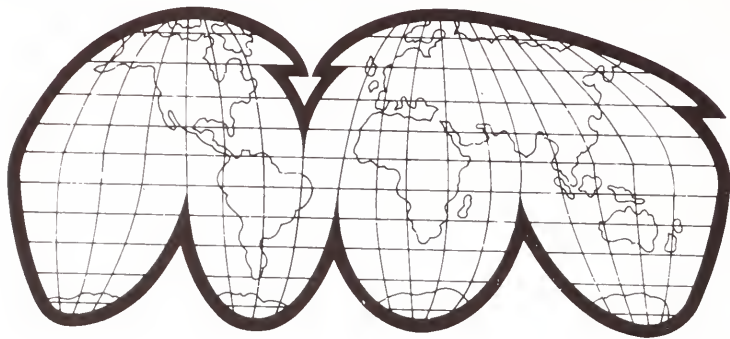
# THE BRETHREN Evangelist

SEPTEMBER 1989





# Developing a Global Vision



by  
**John  
Maust**

## Triumph in Tragedy

**T**HE 7:30 p.m. evangelistic meeting in Lima, Peru, got started all right. Then the crowded sanctuary went black.

People gasped, but no one seemed particularly nervous or upset. In Peru, where terrorists blow up high-tension towers in much the same way that U.S. kids shoot off firecrackers on the Fourth of July, power blackouts are disgustingly common.

I was thinking that the meeting would be called off, when suddenly the ushers started passing out candles. And the speaker, missionary Ken Opperman, went on with his message, which, ironically, focused on the Christian and suffering.

As hundreds of tiny candles flickered eerily in the cavernous sanctuary, the missionary recalled the story of an athletic young student from a Bible institute high in Peru's Andean Mountains.

Some years earlier, this promising young church leader had preached one night in an Andean village. As a result, many people committed their lives to Christ. True to his character, Carlos (not his real name) stayed to pray for the new converts after everyone else left.

### Some sadistic fun

Around 11 p.m., Carlos locked up the church and started for home. Just then, however, some drunks passed by and decided to have some sadistic fun. "Those evangelicals say they don't drink," they said. "We'll see about that."

They overpowered Carlos and

threw him to the ground. Then they forced hard liquor down his throat and beat him mercilessly.

When Carlos didn't come home, concerned family and friends went looking for him. But the man they found bleeding in the dirt wasn't the same as the one they'd left behind hours earlier.

### Prayer for vengeance

When Opperman, then a young missionary, heard what had happened, he hurried into the mountains to visit his student. Before he reached the house, however, Carlos's mother ran frantically outside. "Whatever you do," she said, "don't look shocked when you see Carlos."

Opperman brushed her off and went inside. But he was not prepared for what he saw. Carlos, that once-formidable physical specimen, dragged his body to walk. And he self-consciously used his poncho to wipe saliva that dribbled from a corner of his disfigured mouth.

Seeing Carlos, Opperman felt deep anger surge within him. The missionary impulsively pulled Carlos to a kneeling position and ordered, "We're going to pray!"

Opperman then launched into a long and angry diatribe against injustice, asking God to right this terrible wrong. Then, his words still reverberating, he told Carlos, "Now, you pray."

First there was silence. Then Carlos, talking aloud for the first time since his beating, uttered some very different words: "*Jesús, Jesús, ben-*

*dito Jesús.*" "Jesus, Jesus, blessed Jesus." Nothing more.

The words slapped Opperman like a wet towel, and shame swept over him. Carlos, the humble Quechua student, had taught his missionary teacher an unforgettable lesson. (Carlos later went on to become a respected pastor, Opperman said.)

This story came to mind as I reflected on recent violence around the world. Like Opperman, I get mad about injustices in our world.

Didn't it make *you* angry when the unarmed students were massacred in China? Or how about the car bombs in Beirut or the countless other acts of senseless violence worldwide?

Actually, anger isn't all bad. We Christians have been too apathetic in the face of evil. And haven't we known since Sunday school to hate the sin but not the sinner?

Maybe we're missing the real answer here. Maybe, as Carlos demonstrated, the proper alternative is to hold on to God that much tighter in deep, abiding faith. (Isn't it interesting how persecuted, suffering Christians often exhibit the deepest, most contagious faith of all?)

As Christians, we have the potential in the Holy Spirit to go through hardship without losing our joy — even when we must do it on pure faith, no gushy feelings involved.

I've always marveled at these words from the Prophet Habakkuk, and now I know many Third World (and other) Christians who have practiced them:

*Though the fig tree does not bud  
and there are no grapes on the vines,  
though the olive crop fails  
and the fields produce no food,  
though there are no sheep in the pen  
and no cattle in the stalls,  
yet I will rejoice in the LORD,  
I will be joyful in God my Savior.*

*Hab. 3:17-18, NIV*

To my way of thinking, these words are a declaration of triumph; of victory above circumstances. This is faith.

I hope we North American Christians never get tortured for our faith and that our kids never go hungry. But I do pray that we will always rejoice in the Lord, no matter what happens. In a world that is hurting, simple Christian joy might be our best witness of all. [†]

THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST  
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## An Important Meeting

The Brethren Church took what could be a significant step in its history when delegates at General Conference elected members to eight new commissions. These commissions will do the work (and hopefully more) formerly done by several cooperating boards and committees of General Conference.

Each of these commissions met briefly on Friday morning of Conference week to organize, review and discuss its purpose, and set goals for the year. The commissions will begin working in earnest at their next meeting on Saturday, September 30. Both the commissions and the General Conference Executive Council (which coordinates their work) will meet at that time. Your prayers for this important meeting are requested. Names of the commission members are listed on page 15 of this issue.

## Answers to Little Crusader Page:

Answer to "An Important Question": "Do you not KNOW that your BODY is a TEMPLE of the HOLY SPIRIT, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not YOUR OWN; you were BOUGHT at a PRICE. Therefore HONOR God with your BODY."





# Dealing With CONFLICT



By Stephen Barber

**C**ONFLICT occurs in every factory, office, church, and home. It affects Brethren as well as Southern Baptists, black and white, Mensa members and the mentally challenged. Not a day goes by without conflict wreaking some havoc in our "nice" lives.

We usually respond to conflict by reducing it in some destructive way. Some reduce it by hiding their heads in the sand. Others suppress conflict by taking control or by making unhealthy decisions. Unfortunately, few people know how to deal constructively with the continuing deluge of conflict.

## Is Utopia Possible?

Prior to the sinking of the *Lusitania*,\* theologians around the world were proclaiming that the church would usher in the millennial kingdom of Christ. It appeared that humankind was progressively getting better and that conflict was being reduced.

But by the time the Versailles Treaty was signed and the doughboys were either home or buried, some churchmen had changed their views. Yet many per-

\*British passenger ship with Americans aboard sunk by a German submarine May 7, 1915, contributing to U.S. entry into World War I.

*Rev. Barber is pastor of the County Line Brethren Church, Lakeville, Ind., and a member of the General Conference Social Responsibilities Commission. This article was written at the request of the now defunct Social Concerns Committee of General Conference, of which he was also a member.*

sisted in believing that humankind was still progressing, and they optimistically called the First World War, "The War to End All Wars." They hoped that Woodrow Wilson's League of Nations would prevent another similar war.

Unfortunately, the prophets were wrong. Humankind had not gotten any better. Twenty years later, Germany invaded Poland.

Theologians in particular and humankind in general have learned that conflict is part of human experience. Conflict is unavoidable. In fact, when we try to avoid conflict, it actually worsens! It always has been and always will be impossible for fallen human beings to live with one another without conflict.

## The Prevalent Philosophy of Conflict

The thriving German Baptist Brethren Church of the nineteenth century is now splintered into at least five separate groups. The conflicts that led ultimately to these five groups were downright ugly. The irony of a "peace" church, which also upheld the teachings of Matthew 18, having such nasty internal fights undermines its witness (see John 17:20-23) and affects us negatively to this day.

From these past experiences, we in The Brethren Church have developed one primary understanding of conflict. We understand conflict to be destructive. It is a threat to the unity of the church. Conflict caused our previous splits. Therefore conflict has become the goat. People who ask penetrating questions are

now viewed as destructive influences because they cause conflict. Those who are not satisfied with the status quo are also viewed as destructive, because their cry for change breeds conflict. Eventually what it boils down to is that anyone who questions a majority-held position or advocates a change from that position is thought of as a conflict-producer, or in other words, divisive.

## Destructive Management of Conflict

This destructive understanding of conflict yields disastrous consequences. According to this point of view, the only way to manage conflict is to try to stop it.

Historically, Brethren have tried to stop conflict in one of two ways. The first way is the turtle's approach, in which one pulls one's head into one's shell and pretends that the conflict doesn't exist, while at the same time hoping it will go away.

The turtle may attend a worship service, board meeting, or General Conference and never say a discouraging word. In fact, the turtle privately prays that Jane Schmoe will keep her mouth shut for a change, so that there will be no conflict.

Unfortunately, by using the turtle approach, nothing is ever resolved. Negative feelings are kept hidden in a manure pit, where they fester, grow, and create dangerous methane gas. Finally, when the turtle explosively expresses itself, the destruction it had tried to avoid destroys the turtle itself.

***"Conflict, when managed properly, provides a laboratory of human relationships in which love, forgiveness, joy, peace, and hope can well up within a person to new levels of ecstatic experience."***

The second way to stop conflict is by exerting power or control over the person(s) perceived as causing the conflict. In business meetings, those anxious for the "question," enabling the majority to assert itself, are using control to quash conflict. Those in power who make unhealthy decisions are often afraid of the conflict it would take to find a healthy solution. The widely held though erroneous idea here is that once a decision is made, the conflict stops. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Those who threaten to church hop if their will is not done are also exercising control to decrease conflict. The pastor who says, "It's my way or else," is often attempting to reduce conflict. But does it work? Of course not!

Both of these ways of stopping conflict — the turtle approach and the power play — actually produce more conflict. Yet these are the ways we Brethren have widely used. There must be a better way.

### **Toward a Philosophy of Conflict**

**A. Conflict is Part of the Human Condition.** A brief examination of scripture clearly illustrates that when humankind fell, we fell into a state of conflict with God, with others, and even with ourselves. Many non-believers point to the Old Testament as one of the most violent and conflict-ridden books of all time. There are parts of it we'd rather not read. It is filled with nearly every sin imaginable.

Paul's New Testament letters offer scant hope of a church without conflict, let alone of a world without dissension. Furthermore, efforts to avoid or eliminate conflict are counterproductive. These efforts inevitably lead to only greater conflict in the future.

**B. Conflict is an Opportunity for Growth.** Lovers know that managing conflict can be very difficult. But managing conflict positively leads to a better understanding and deeper appreciation of one another. Con-

flict, when managed properly, provides a laboratory of human relationships in which love, forgiveness, joy, peace, and hope can well up within a person to new levels of ecstatic experience.

It is conflict with God, others, and self that creates the need for reconciliation. Indeed, God has given us the ministry of reconciliation (II Cor. 5:16-21). Once we have experienced the joy of communion with God and our fellow human beings, it is our responsibility to help others experience that joy as well. It is very important that we give conflict some positive press.

Conflict is also a catalyst for creativity. New ideas grow exponentially when constructive conflict is encouraged rather than suppressed. Managing conflict positively is well worth our while.

### **Constructive Management of Conflict Between Two Parties**

For Christians there is no better resource than the word of God to guide us through the maze of conflict. As feelings of conflict grow and develop, it is critical that we have a standard by which to determine the best possible course of action. Below are some biblical principles we should follow:

1. *Get yourself right with the Lord.* Examine yourself. Acknowledge and confess your own sinfulness. Ask and receive the cleansing Jesus so freely offers to you. Let the Spirit live through you (Matt. 7:1-5; Col. 3:12-17).

2. *When you become aware of conflict, go to the other person(s) involved.* The destructive and childish game of "He [She] is the one who should be coming to me!" is never consistent with scripture (Gen. 13:8, 9; Matt. 5:24, 25; Matt. 18:15).

3. *Be anxious to forgive others in love.* Forgiveness and love resolve a multitude of conflicts. Be careful, however, that you do not do this superficially — by your own strength rather than the Lord's. Turtles forgive superficially to destructively re-

duce the current conflict. Unfortunately, they also carry resentments deep inside, sometimes for decades (Matt. 18:21-35; Mk. 11:25).

### **Constructive Management of Conflict Using a Third Party**

Sometimes it is helpful and prudent to seek the assistance of an objective third party in order to facilitate reconciliation. Complementing Matthew 18, the Mennonite Conciliation Service has developed a successful approach to conflict using a trained mediator. Please understand that the following synopsis is intended as general information and not to train the reader to be a qualified mediator.

1. *Participants.* The participants include the mediator(s) and the two disputant parties.

2. *Procedure.* Prior to discussing the issues or personalities involved, it is critical to lay down the procedure and some ground rules. These include acknowledging that the mediator will not make any decisions and agreeing that when one disputant is talking the other disputant will not interrupt. It is important to view the mediator as a facilitator of the process, not as an arbitrator with decision-making powers.

3. *Story-Telling.* Each disputant is given the opportunity to tell his (her) side of the story. It is vital that each disputant know that he (she) has been fully heard and understood.

4. *Problem-Solving.* The mediator facilitates discussion between the disputants in order to reduce hostility, encourage reconciliation, and help the disputants find common ground.

5. *Agreement.* The mediator documents what both parties agree to, which document, when completed, is signed by both parties.

### **Conclusions**

Although there have been exceptions, The Brethren Church on the whole, both at the denominational and congregational levels, has not



*Every Brethren congregation is urged to send representatives to:*

# Our Historic Denominational Planning Retreat

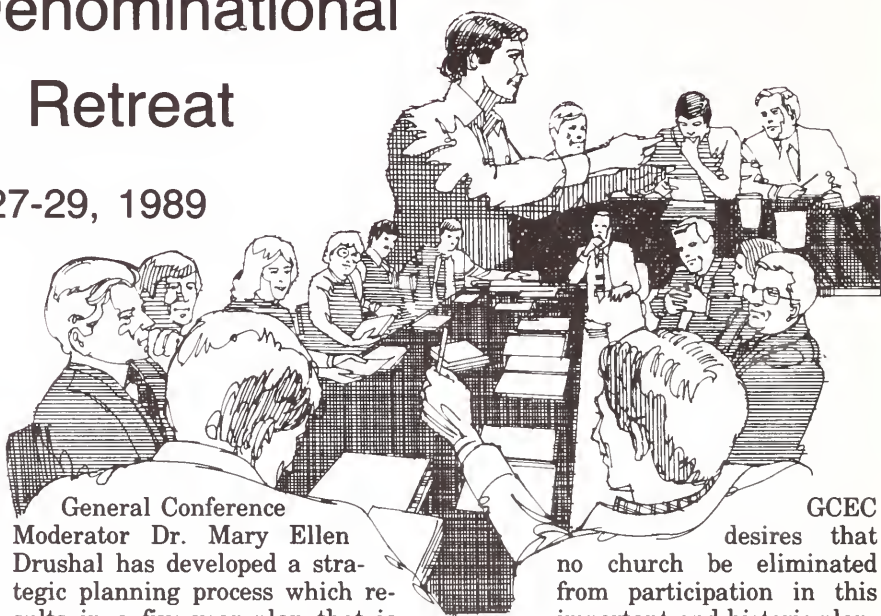
November 27-29, 1989

**T**HE BRETHREN CHURCH has implemented a denominational structure that sets a new direction for the church. In order that as many people as possible may be involved in determining where this new direction will lead, the General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) proposed that a retreat be held in which denominational leaders and local church representatives could meet together to plan for the future of our church.

Moderator Kenneth Sullivan presented this proposal to the recent 101st General Conference, and delegates to the Conference approved his recommendation that each church send its pastor and a lay leader to the proposed retreat.

This denominational planning retreat will be held November 27-29, 1989, at the Beulah Beach Retreat Center, a Christian and Missionary Alliance facility in Vermilion, Ohio. At that retreat, GCEC desires to accomplish the following objectives:

- Encourage the open discussion of ideas for denominational ministry.
- Outline the future direction of ministry for The Brethren Church.
- Secure personal, prayerful, and financial support for those ministries/ventures generated by this planning group.



General Conference Moderator Dr. Mary Ellen Drushal has developed a strategic planning process which results in a five-year plan that is both objective and participative. She will lead participants in the retreat through this process, which consists of three major components:

1. Prayerful envisioning of ministry opportunities for The Brethren Church. (Taking those ministry ideas revealed through prayer, a numerical process is utilized to select those items to be undertaken in the next five years.)

2. Determining purpose, goals, and strategy for each ministry. (This is hard work but necessary in order to assure that each idea is firmly understood and fully accepted.)

3. Selecting the priorities for accomplishing each component in the five-year plan. (Bar graphs are used to outline the sequential steps and estimated time needed to accomplish the component.)

GCEC desires that no church be eliminated from participation in this important and historic planning event because of inadequate resources. Finances have been solicited from and promised by The Brethren Church Foundation and two individuals, who have elicited support from other Brethren lay persons. GCEC is confident that room and board will be covered for every participant. Churches who are able to absorb the travel costs for their representatives are encouraged to do so. Those churches unable to do this will, hopefully through these promised gifts, be assisted in meeting these costs.

Brethren across the country are encouraged to unite in prayer for this retreat. Mindful of Paul's words in Romans 12:9-13, let us be devoted to one another and to prayer as we seek to establish this active course for The Brethren Church. [†]

*(continued from page 5)*

dealt with conflict in healthy ways. Conflict has been destructively avoided, stopped, quashed, or driven out. John 17:20-23 implies that when conflict is dealt with destructively, our witness to the world is destroyed. The unity described by Jesus in John 17 is not a unity in which conflict is absent, but one in which it is handled constructively.

If The Brethren Church is to grow,

great amounts of energy must be devoted to learning how to handle conflict. Untrained people should not be asked to mediate disputes. Denominational leaders, district elders, pastors, and lay leaders should all go back to school to learn how to correct the errors of the past, the present, and the future. It will be extremely difficult. This writer has been a turtle all his life, and he knows it is not easy to change. [†]

## Resources

Mennonite Conciliation Service, 21 South 12th Street, Box M, Akron, PA 17501. Phone: 717-859-1151

Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, 528 E. Madison, Lombard, IL 60148. Phone: 312-627-5310

Christian Conciliation Service (CCS); local chapters are networked together with no national organization. Contact Alice Curtis of the Christian Legal Society for a CCS chapter near you.

Christian Legal Society, P.O. Box 1492, Merrifield, VA 22116. Ph.: 703-642-1070

# The Supremacy of Jesus

The 1989 General Conference

Moderator's Address\*

By Rev. Kenneth Sullivan

**I**T WAS July 17, A.D. 180. Twelve people stood before the Proconsul Saturninus in the city of Carthage. Their crime: membership in an outlawed sect called "Christians." They had been called before the proconsul in hopes that he could reason with them. Proconsul Saturninus said, "You can win the leniency of our Lord the Emperor if you return to reason."

One of the twelve responded: "We have never done wrong. We have not taken part in any crime. We have never cursed, nor stolen. We pay our taxes. We do not commit murder or bear false witness. Even if ill-treated we only give thanks. Therefore we honor our Emperor."

The proconsul said, "We too are a religious people, and our religion is simple. We swear by the genius of our Lord the Emperor and offer sacrifices for his well-being. You must do that too."

One of the twelve answered, "We do not recognize any empire of this present age. We serve that God whom no man has seen, or can see with these eyes. We know only one Lord, the King of Kings, the Ruler of all nations. What we are we wish to remain."

\*This is an edited version of the moderator's address. The entire text will be included in the 1989 General Conference annual, copies of which will be sent to every Brethren church.

The proconsul read the sentence from his tablet. "All those who confess that they want to live according to the Christian custom shall be executed by the sword; since they remain obstinate, although the opportunity was offered them to return to the Roman tradition." They were immediately executed with the sword.

Tertullian, in a letter, has made the point for all time: "It becomes evident that the entire crime with which they charge us does not consist in any wicked acts, but in the bearing of a name. Again and again it is the Name that must be punished by the sword, the gallows, the cross, or the wild beasts. It is the name Jesus."

## Who will be Lord?

The confession and apologetic of the early church was, "Jesus is Lord!" That confession was and is the plumbline of the Christian Faith! It was and always will be the question of who will be Lord, who will have supremacy? For the Apostolic Church it was a choice between Caesar or Christ. For the Reformation it was a choice between the institutional church and its traditions or Christ. For the Anabaptist and Pietist it was a choice between a State Church with its creed or Christ. And now? It is no different. The question is the same. There will

always be a new challenger. There will always be the question, "Who will be Lord in our time?" Make no mistake; JESUS IS LORD!

We can't speak of Christ's Lordship without including the church. The church embodies the implications of what His Lordship is about. The Bible says, "... he is the head of the body, the church . . . (Col. 1:18\*\*). "... Christ is the head of the church, of which he is the Savior . . . as the church submits to Christ . . ." (Eph. 5:23, 24). "And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way" (Eph. 1:22, 23).

You will not find one plastic picture of the church on any page of scripture. The Bible describes with raw honesty the nature and makeup of the body of Christ. It is local, but it is also universal; it is visible, but it is also invisible; it is human, but it is also divine. It is made up of real people — people of flesh and bone, of triumphs and failures, of spiritual depth or shallowness, of beauty or ugliness, of obedience or sinfulness.

What the church is and does testifies to Christ's supremacy. It embodies the rule of Christ on earth. It

\*\*Bible quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the *New International Version*.





*Moderator Kenneth Sullivan at the lectern where he delivered his moderator's address, with the theme of that message — and of the Conference — on the large crown behind him.*

embodies Christ's offer of reconciliation, the fellowship of love made possible through His redemptive work, the power of God through His Son and consequently through His church. Whatever Jesus is, the church is to be an extension of Him on this planet.

How are we to be a church which reflects the supremacy of Christ in our time? Paul's words in Colossians help us discern the necessary aspects of what the church must be if it is to truly reflect Christ's supremacy in our day and in our culture.

**FIRST, IF OUR CHURCH IS TO REFLECT THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST IN OUR TIME, WE MUST BE A COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS GATHERED TOGETHER IN A COVENANT OF PRAYER.**

Jesus said, "My house will be called a house of prayer" (Matt. 21:13). Have you ever counted the number of times Paul uses the word "prayer" or its concept in his letters? His letters overflow with prayer! His life is a prayer, a prayer on behalf of the church. Paul's letters praised God for the church and he thanked God for the people in the church — all of them, even the contrary ones.

In Colossians 1:3 he writes: "We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you . . ." It is the same in all his epistles. See for example Romans 1:8, I Corinthians 1:4, Ephesians 1:16,

Philippians 1:3, and I Thessalonians 1:2.

Paul also petitioned God for the church, entreating Him for very specific things. In Colossians 1:9 he writes: "For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding."

In Ephesians 1:17 he prays that the church might be given a "Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better." In Philippians 1:9, 10, he prays "that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ . . ."

### **An experience of prayer**

I remember my first experience with the Brethren. It was at a mid-week prayer meeting at a Brethren church in Akron, Ohio. I had never been to a prayer meeting before and did not know what to expect. Praise and thanksgiving as well as the prayer requests were shared among those there. Then the pastor said, "Let us go to prayer." Everyone turned around in the pews and all got down on their knees before their God. One by one they took turns lifting their voices to God's throne. It seemed to me that they had deter-

mined to storm the very throne room of God and to refuse to stop until God had answered their prayers. There was power in that place. I will never forget that experience.

These Brethren understood what Paul understood, that Christ "has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve [our] God" (Rev. 1:5, 6; 5:10); that we "are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God . . . [that we] are a chosen people, a royal priesthood . . . that [we] may declare the praises of him who called [us] out of darkness into his wonderful light" (I Pet. 2:5-9).

### **The priesthood of all believers**

The first thing I learned about the Brethren was the importance they placed on the priesthood of all believers. What is a priest? In the Old Testament a priest represented the sinner before God, offering sacrifices for his sins. Today, Jesus is our High Priest who has made the one and final sacrifice for all our sins. In the New Testament the priest was seen as an advocate and a mediator; one who pleads for another before a higher authority. Jesus is our Mediator (I Tim. 2:5) and our Advocate (I Jn. 2:1). There is a sense in which we carry on similar ministries. We do it through prayer — for the church and for the world.

In Acts 4:31 we read, "After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly." There was power in the prayers of the early church. There is power in the prayers of those who take it seriously.

C. John Miller writes of having visited an inner-city pastor in Newark, New Jersey, Grover Wilcox; the Schaeffers at L'Abri; and a person recommended by Martyn Lloyd-Jones, a Miss Elizabeth Brond in a slum area of London.

These were Christians God was using and His kingdom power moved among them. He listed these

***"The world is quite content to allow us to give mental assent to any belief we choose. It is the Christian who begins to act on what he or she believes who shakes up everyone. This is the kind of person who turns the world upside down for Christ . . . ."***

four characteristics that were true of them all: (1) They labored to make the gospel clear and relevant; (2) They were available people; (3) They all put themselves in positions of vulnerability; (4) **They were unusually effective in prayer.**

When John Miller visited Grover Wilcox, he discovered a man who deplored his prayer life yet who spent all of Monday morning till noon in prayer. He learned from the Schaeffers that they prayed all the time; prayed about everything; had days of prayer; prayer before things and prayer after things. When he met Miss Elizabeth Brond, John found that so many young people had been converted that gangs disappeared from the neighborhoods in which she ministered. The police even came to investigate to discover what sinister things she had done with these kids. When asked what was happening to account for the movement of God, those who worked with her replied, "You ought to hear her pray! If you did, you would understand."

**If we expect to be a community reflecting the supremacy of our Lord, we must be a community of believers gathered together in a covenant of prayer.**

I praise God for the revival occurring among the Brethren. It is a product of prayer, and it can only be sustained by prayer. I ask our pastors to recommit themselves to serious prayer; that you nurture your prayer life and that you nurture the prayer life of your church. And I ask our lay people to encourage their pastors in their prayer life, to encourage them to spend both quality time as well as large periods of time in prayer with our Lord daily.

**SECONDLY: IF WE ARE TO BE A CHURCH WHICH REFLECTS THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST IN OUR TIME, WE MUST BE A COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS GATHERED TOGETHER IN A COVENANT OF OBEDIENCE.**

Jesus said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (John

14:15, RSV). Our obedience is tied to who He is! Colossians 1:15-19 states, "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. . . . all things were created by him and for him. . . . And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy."

### **What does supremacy mean?**

Have you considered what that word "supremacy" means. The Greek word *proteuo* means "first place." Consider the synonyms for this word: preeminence, dominance, control, dominion, domination, sovereignty, mastery, command.

Charles Colson has written, "The Bible makes clear . . . that unquestioning acceptance of and obedience to Jesus' authority is the foundation of the Christian life. Everything else rests upon this. People often ask, 'How do I get that vibrant, strong faith of Christian maturity?' That's where obedience comes in. For maturing faith — faith which deepens and grows as we live our Christian life — is not just knowledge, but knowledge acted upon. It is not just belief, but belief lived out — practiced."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, "Only he who believes is obedient, only he who is obedient believes." Even Jesus tied obedience to faith when He answered the question, "What must we do to do the works God requires?" Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent" (Jn. 6:28, 29).

Belief is more than intellectual assent. James writes, ". . . faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. . . . Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that — and shudder" (Jas. 2:17-19). The confession of the early Brethren was the same: piety, faith linked to faithfulness, not the repetition of creeds, but

action. Any claim to faith had to translate itself into practical results.

The world is quite content to allow us to give mental assent to any belief we choose. It is the Christian who begins to act on what he or she believes who shakes up everyone. This is the kind of person who turns the world upside down for Christ, as the early church did.

Charles Colson in his book, *Loving God*, tells the story of a Russian doctor by the name of Boris Kornfeld, a Jew who had been sent to prison for having displeased the authorities. At first he was overwhelmed by his hatred of those who kept him there. But prison gave him abundant time to think, and, in the process, he was converted to the Christian faith. His faith began to mold and shape his conduct. Once, when operating on a guard, he had tied the sutures in such a way that the guard would later die of a blood hemorrhage. But his faith would not let him act in this way, so he retied each suture so the guard would live.

### **Passing on the faith**

One day Kornfeld was confronted by a patient who had been operated on for intestinal cancer. His heart went out to this man, and he stopped to talk with him, describing what had happened to him and his conversion to Jesus Christ. The patient knew he was listening to an incredible confession. He hung on the doctor's words until he fell asleep.

The young patient awoke the next morning to the sound of running feet and a commotion in the area of the operating room. During the night, someone had crept up behind the doctor while he slept and beat him to death. But Kornfeld's testimony did not die. The patient had become a Christian and survived the prison camp. The patient's name was Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

This is the kind of obedience the church needs. But if obedience requires anything, it requires obedience to Christ's command to discipline the world. It requires that we



ask the hard questions and wrestle with the difficult issues. Our denomination is preparing to do just that with a planning retreat this November.

With this in mind, I recommend that each Brethren church send its pastor and a lay leader as its representatives to this Denominational Planning retreat. I further recommend that each Brethren church make every effort to help absorb the travel costs for its representatives.

If we expect to be effective in reflecting the supremacy of our Lord, we must be a community of believers gathered together in a covenant of obedience.

**THIRDLY: IF WE EXPECT TO BE A CHURCH WHICH REFLECTS THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST IN OUR TIME, WE MUST BE A COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS GATHERED TOGETHER IN A COVENANT OF SACRIFICIAL SERVICE.**

Jesus said, "Do you understand what I have done for you? You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you" (Jn. 13:12-15).

The very image of what service means to the Brethren is found in this passage. We rightly make it a part of our Communion service. But our Lord expects us to translate its meaning into everyday life.

Paul writes, ". . . I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fulness . . ." (Col. 1:24-25).

Paul's life was an illustration of the ministry of the early church. He gave himself sacrificially in service to others. He endured beatings, stonings, persecution, lack of food, shelter and safety, rejection by his own people and rejection by those in the church. He did it all in an attempt to win others to the truth of the gospel.

Within the population of the Roman Empire the early church won 500,000 converts a year while still persecuted and considered an illegal

cult. All this happened without the help of organized mission societies, para-church ministries, or church growth conventions. Theologian Jefferson Davis writes that it was the church's high moral standards and its compassion for the less fortunate that made the difference. The church reached out to the widows, the disabled, sick and infirm. Christians ministered to slaves, visited prisoners and those in the mines, found work for the unemployed, provided assistance in times of disaster, and gave hospitality to strangers.

They took seriously the words of Jesus, "Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matt. 10:39). "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all" (Mk. 9:35). (See also Luke 14:11 and Mark 10:42-45).

In the face of a "get-everything-you-can world," we must stand up and by our actions say, "Give everything you can with the life you have." What better way to do this than by serving Christ through the church and especially through the work of the pastor, church planter, or missionary. Our denomination needs those who will make this kind of sacrifice.

With this in mind, I recommend that each Brethren pastor and each Brethren church recognize and assume their God-given responsibility of identifying, calling, nurturing, and ordaining people for the pastoral ministry, church planting, and world missions.

If we expect to be effective in reflecting the supremacy of our Lord, we must be a community of believers gathered together in a covenant of sacrificial service.

**LASTLY: IF WE ARE TO BE A CHURCH WHICH REFLECTS THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST IN OUR TIME, WE MUST BE A COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS GATHERED TOGETHER IN A COVENANT OF TRUTH.**

Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life" (Jn. 14:6). Over and over Jesus said, "I tell you the truth . . ."

Paul wrote to the Colossians saying, "My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the

full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I tell you this so that no one may deceive you . . ." (Col. 2:2-4).

Because Christian truth is supernatural in its origin, it creates a violent collision between the secular and sacred; between opinionated self as the standard and divine revelation as the final touchstone of truth.

Harry Blamiers, a British writer, has made the point that we try fighting these battles over the Bible on the world's turf. We need to fight on our own ground. We spend too much time trying to defend the Bible when we should be declaring it. The Bible is God's word and needs no defense. In fact, the Bible tells us in Romans 2 that God has written His law on the hearts of men.

G. Gordon Liddy, former White House aide and cohort in the Watergate break-in became a Christian precisely because he became involved with a Bible study group that shared the Bible as God's authoritative word instead of trying to defend it to Liddy. His interest in the Bible was purely historical until he considered the seriousness with which they took the word of God. "If they are persuaded of the correctness of this," thought Liddy, "then maybe I should take another look." In the process he was converted.

What is it that sets Christian truth apart from all others? Christian truth is supernaturally grounded, not developed within nature. It is objective, not subjective; it is revelational, not construction; it is discovered by enquiry, not elected by the majority; it is authoritative, not a matter of personal choice; it is absolute, not relative. There is only one place to find this kind of truth — in the Bible. II Timothy tells us that all scripture is "God breathed" or "inspired" of God.

We must take this book seriously. We must study it. We must live it. How do we expect the next generation to think clearly, to believe the right things, if we fail to wrestle with what we believe and articulate plainly the truth? We must give it to them in clear fashion.

If we expect to be effective in re-  
(concluded on page 12)

# Following Jesus With Integrity

A review of the Conference messages of Dr. John Perkins and an overview of the witness of his life.

By Jean Lersch

**M**ODERATOR Ken Sullivan introduced Dr. John Perkins to the 1989 General Conference by referring to the impact of reading *Let Justice Roll Down*, one of Perkins' six books. Sullivan said, "I was forced to ask myself, 'Lord, what am I doing with my life that makes a difference?' " I know the feeling.

Learning about the work of this brilliant, gracious disciple of Christ speaks almost as much as his words. Let me share a few of the ideas he expressed to us at General Conference and a little about his life.

Dr. Perkins talked about following Jesus. He talked about having His mind, about being His replacement here on earth. When we follow Jesus, we have integrity, just as Jesus demonstrated His integrity as God's Anointed One when He lived on earth.

Jesus was careful to live up to Old Testament prophecy by giving His attention to the poor and oppressed. First, He set up His headquarters in Capernaum among the hated Gentiles, who were the lowest class of that day. Later, during the feast at Jerusalem, He went to the poor, the people with great need — the blind, the lame, and the paralyzed — who were waiting to be healed. "Jesus' identity was to be that He gave attention to the poor and oppressed. Concern for the poor and integrity of living are how we can know we are following Jesus," Perkins explained.

On Wednesday evening, after giving three messages, John Perkins' final prayer was for a greater sense of urgency to get the gospel out.

*Mrs. Lersch, is a member of the St. Petersburg, Fla., Brethren Church, of the Brethren House Ministries team, and chair of the new Social Responsibilities Commission of General Conference.*



*Dr. Perkins demonstrated his integrity at Conference by joining Conference attendees for meals and, as here, by taking time to talk with them after his message.*

"The whole church taking the whole gospel on a whole mission to the whole world." He had explained in his three messages based on biblical texts (Matthew 4:12-25; II Timothy 2:1-10; John 5:1-9) what that meant.

## The Whole Church

Christ's mission can only be carried out here on earth by His body, the church. Christianity is not an individual matter. Instead of trying to be good individual Christians, we need to be building up the body of Christ by developing the gifts of our members so that we are empowered to do God's will on earth. "We are called to be community people," Dr. Perkins explained. "We have the responsibility to reflect God in the world." Our task as the church is to work as God's people collectively, not think so much about what *I* can do.

Dr. Perkins' life authenticates his discipleship. As a black child in Mississippi, he had grown up without a father and mother and with little schooling. As a teenager, he moved to California and after serving in the Korean war, created a comfortable lifestyle for his family. But he returned to Mississippi, the place of ghastly childhood memories, to share the gospel and build Christian communities to empower people still

living in grinding poverty. He came back because he felt God calling him to build Christian communities among his people. John Perkins demonstrated the integrity of following Jesus.

## The Whole Gospel

The gospel is both spiritual and social. The purpose of the gospel is to reconcile us to God and remove our sin. That's spiritual. But the purpose of the gospel is also to reconcile us to each other over racial, cultural, social, and economic barriers. "If you don't believe in reconciliation, you don't understand the gospel," Dr. Perkins said.

Dr. Perkins' life is a testimony to his belief. He was a victim of racial hatred during his youth in Mississippi. After moving to California and finding Christ, he realized the need for Christians to demonstrate reconciliation. So he went back to the place where he had lived in miserable circumstances and where he had seen his older brother unjustly killed by white lawmen. Later, Perkins himself would be beaten nearly to death while a white sheriff watched. But he stayed for 22 years. He proved that the only way to overcome evil was with God's reconciling love. That reconciliation is part of the gospel. *(continued next page)*



The whole gospel involves evangelism, every Christian's job. New Testament evangelism is sharing what God the Holy Spirit is doing in one's life. Asking people if they want to be saved is not a New Testament concept. The New Testament concept is people who are lost asking people who are saved, "What must I do to be like you?" New Testament evangelism is always the evangelist answering the question of the sinner.

Sharing the whole gospel also means taking social responsibilities. We need to apply our faith to society. We need to affirm the dignity of people, created in God's image, by helping them acquire needed skills so they can become what God created them to be.

The whole gospel involves doing justice. The concept of redemption comes out of God's heart of justice. The first time we hear about redemption in the Bible was when Moses was encountered by God at the burning bush. God had seen injustice and the suffering of His people and wanted Moses to deliver them.

### A Whole Mission

The mission of the church is to reach people with the Good News that they can be forgiven and made new. Part of this transformation for the poor, to whom we are called, involves equipping them with skills to work so that they can have their dignity affirmed. Then people will claim this Good News not only for themselves, but want to carry it to the next village.

John Perkins has carried the gospel to several villages in Mississippi, winning people to Christ and helping them build Christian commu-

nities. In these communities the new Christians have built churches and provided the means for people to improve their lives.

Perkins has now turned over the leadership of the Mississippi ministries to others. He and his wife, Vera Mae, have started new work in Pasadena, California. There, in the midst of crime and drugs, a Christian Family Center has been founded to reinforce the family and minister to the social, economic, and spiritual needs of the neighborhood.

The mission of the church is to preach repentance and make disciples who will become equipped to share their new lives with others. Too often, people living in poverty want to improve their status by moving away from these places. Jesus calls disciples to places where people are poor to help them become skilled, then move back and equip others. That's part of the mission of the church.

### The Whole World

"Let's follow Jesus to the regions of the shadow of death," Dr. Perkins said as he began his first message. That is wherever people are hurting. That's where Jesus went, and if He is our Lord, we too will go to these places. By the end of the century, 75 to 80 percent of the world's population will be living in urban areas. That's where we need to be taking the gospel.

Are we just playing at church? Does our materialism, exemplified in our comfortable lifestyles and accumulated "stuff," keep us from taking the gospel to the whole world? Have we lost the urgency of our mission? Are we so caught up in fighting causes that we have failed to ac-

cept our responsibility?

"My greatest task," Dr. Perkins commented, "is helping people become responsible." He is against abortion, but he is just as concerned about taking responsibility for poor babies coming into the world. Shouldn't we be just as concerned about what is happening in South Africa, about what is happening in the ghettos as we are about preventing abortion? "Life, all of life, is important. When we lose life, we lose consciousness of God. We are fighting somebody instead of being responsible for the situation and helping people become responsible for their condition."

Again, Dr. Perkins practices what he preaches. He has not only helped establish Christian communities among poor people in Mississippi and California. He just returned from six weeks working with Australian aborigines, whose dignity is being destroyed by their government welfare system. He travels throughout the world, preaching repentance and sharing principles of community development. These principles emerged from his working over 20 years engaging and equipping some of the poorest people in Mississippi by following Jesus.

I am currently reading *With Justice for All* by Dr. Perkins. My copy is autographed, and beside his signature he wrote the text Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." This outliving of the inliving Christ has truly made John Perkins a follower of Jesus with integrity. [†]

### Moderator's Address

(continued from page 10)

flecting the supremacy of our Lord, we must be a community of believers gathered together in a covenant of truth.

With this in mind, I recommend that GCEC, in cooperation with the National Association of Brethren Church Elders, establish a committee to be appointed yearly as there is need, for the purpose of research, study, and publication of Brethren doctrine and theology, in order that our denomination may articulate

clearly its faith and practice and pass on its heritage to succeeding generations.

We are not called to adopt the agenda of the world or baptize it in Christian jargon. We are to offer our world a legitimate new way. It was the church that survived the collapse of Rome and held the world together. It was the church that provided the way through the rubble of fallen society. It is always the church that makes the difference.

The early Brethren sacrificed themselves on the altar of faith and

obedience. They sacrificed their reputation, accumulated wealth, popularity, health, and lives and blood. They sacrificed that we might have the privilege of knowing and acting on the truth of God. Let us not betray the offering of their sacrifice with apathy, indolence, greed, and ignorance. Let us commit ourselves, here and now, to the same Lord, the same ideals, the same truths, the same sacrifice, that those who follow us may know the truth as well.

JESUS IS LORD! [†]

THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST

# A report of the 101st General Conference of The Brethren Church

held August 7-11 in North Manchester, Indiana

Theme: **"Jesus Is Lord!"** Col. 1:18

## Opening Worship Service

The 101st General Conference of The Brethren Church opened with a service of Praise and Worship. Moderator Kenneth Sullivan began the service with prayer, followed by an organ/piano prelude by Lynne Brady and Nancy Hunn playing "Praise Ye the Lord."

The Indiana District Mass Choir, under the direction of Charlene Rowser, then sang "Awesome God," with Mark Baker and Cathy Van Duyne as soloists.

The choir, with Rev. Baker directing, then presented the cantata, "The Great Hymns and Choruses of Yesterday and Today." Rev. Marlin McCann served as worship leader for the cantata, and Mrs. Rowser led the congregation when it joined the choir in song.



*Approximately 1,025 people attended the opening service and were led in worship and praise by the Indiana District Mass Choir.*

Soloists for the presentation were Mary Crowe, Ralph McBride, Steve Barber, Kerry Scott, Mark Britton, Geri Ann Bargerhuff, Kathy Britton, Cathy Van Duyne, and Marlin McCann.

This service combined choir, congregation, and soloists in a time of worship and praise emphasizing the Conference theme, "Jesus Is Lord!" The service, which was attended by approximately 1,025 people, concluded with the choir singing "Lord of All."

— Beverly Baker

## Seminary Banquet

Exciting is a word that describes what is happening at Ashland Theological Seminary. Evidence of this was provided at the seminary banquet, held Tuesday evening of General Conference.

Following an enjoyable meal, Dr. Fred Finks, vice-president, introduced ATS trustees and professors present. Professor Emeritus Dr. Charles Munson, who retired from the seminary this spring, received a standing ovation for his many years of faithful service at ATS.

Dr. Joseph Shultz, former dean of the seminary and now president of both Ashland University and Ashland Theological Seminary,

shared a brief history of the seminary, noting the faithful support of The Brethren Church. He concluded his remarks by thanking the Brethren for making ATS a center of resources that is now giving back to the church.

Perhaps the most exciting part of the banquet came when Dr. Mary Ellen Drushal, associate dean for continuing education, shared just how ATS is giving back to the church. She highlighted three areas: (1) continuing education retreats, including lectures by J.I. Packer this fall and by C. Peter Wagner in the spring; (2) certificate programs in which anyone can

study college and seminary level courses and earn a Certificate in Theological Studies; and (3) the CALM (Church Administration for Leadership and Management) series of workshops. These programs are breaking new ground as a means of enriching The Brethren Church.

The evening concluded on another exciting note as Dr. Finks introduced the Brethren ATS students present, noting how these and other students are reaching out all over the world as a result of their commitment to Christ and the training they receive at ATS.

— Brad Hardesty



# Conference Business Sessions

General Conference business sessions sailed along smoothly, with no agenda item garnering much discussion. This is not to say, however, that no important business was transacted.

More time than usual was spent on elections, since delegates were required for the first time to elect 40 members (five each) for the eight new commissions formed as a result of the denominational reorganization approved last year. The work of these commission members could have a significant impact on the future of The Brethren Church. Delegates also took action to approve for the first time a National Office/Brethren Church Ministries budget of over half a million dollars, to finance the work of the denomination under its new organization.

A total of 453 delegates registered for this year's business sessions (four less than in 1988). Following are business items of note with which they dealt.

**New church.** The first item handled following the seating of delegates was action upgrading the status of the Milmine Brethren Fellowship of Milmine, Ill., from class to mission church. The Milmine congregation, which was formed in September 1988 under the leadership of Pastor Henry Wilson, now has approximately 65 members with an average morning worship attendance of 42.

**Moderator's recommendations.** Moderator Kenneth Sullivan made three recommendations in his address to the Conference. In the first, he recommended that each Brethren church send its pastor and a lay leader to the Denominational Planning Retreat to be held November 27-29 [see article on page 6] and that each church make every effort to help absorb the travel costs for its representatives. The General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) recommended that the Conference affirm this recommendation and urge each lay dele-

*Newly-elected members of General Conference Executive Council are (l. to r.) Moderator-Elect James Sluss, Eastern Rep. Lois Hutzell, Mideast Rep. Virgil Barnhart, and (not shown) Member-at-Large Kenneth Hunn.*



gate to convey this message to his/her local church. The GCEC recommendation was passed.

The moderator's second recommendation was that each Brethren pastor and church fulfill their God-given responsibility to identify, call, nurture, and ordain people for pastoral ministry, church planting, and world missions. This recommendation was likewise approved, along with the added instruction that pastors send information about potential ministry candidates to the Director of Pastoral Ministries and the Leadership Development Commission and the suggestion that the first Sunday of June be set aside each year as "Ministry Recruitment Sunday."

In his third recommendation, the moderator asked that GCEC, in cooperation with the National Association of Brethren Church Elders, establish a committee to research, study, and publish Brethren doctrine and theology. This recommendation was also approved.

**Statistician's report.** The annual statistician's report contained both encouraging and discouraging information. It was encouraging to hear that 46 of our 124 churches reported an increase in membership; 39 reported an increase in Sunday school attendance, 41 reported an increase in morning worship attendance; and 46 reported an increase in Church Growth Index (total of membership, aver-

age worship attendance, and average S.S. attendance divided by three). It was also encouraging to learn that as a denomination our membership is up from last year (from 14,665 to 14,753). On the other hand it was discouraging to hear that average S.S. and worship attendance and the Church Growth Index were all three down from last year.

Statistician Bill Walk also went to a great deal of work putting together a compilation showing average worship and Sunday school attendance for each church for every year from 1984 through 1988. Totals from that compilation also contained bad news and good news. Over that five-year period, average S.S. attendance declined (from 7,604 to 6,983), as did average worship attendance (from 10,702 to 10,456), while total membership increased (from 14,229 to 14,753).

**Treasurer's report.** The General Conference treasurer's report was approved with little comment, despite a net operating loss last year of \$11,455.38. This loss was largely due to the fact that apportionment receipts were more than \$12,000 less than budgeted (and almost \$10,000 less than was received in 1987). Expenses for the year were about as budgeted.

**Health insurance.** One of the few ripples in the business session proceedings occurred in response to the report of the Retire- (next page)

ment Board. Brethren disturbed by the huge past and anticipated rate increases for health insurance from Mennonite Mutual Aid Association asked that the General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) "consider this matter and make a recommendation as to possible future options." This matter was referred to the GCEC since the Retirement Board no longer cares for health insurance (and has not since The Brethren Church entered into an arrangement with Mennonite Mutual).

**Elections.** In the elections, *Rev. James Sluss*, pastor of the First Brethren Church of Roanoke, Ind., was chosen moderator-elect. A graduate of both Ashland College and Ashland Theological Seminary, *Rev. Sluss* (50) taught at Krypton Mission in Kentucky, was C.E. director at Nappanee Brethren Church, and pastored the Dutchtown, Ind., and Lathrop, Calif., Brethren congregations before moving to Roanoke.

Also elected to GCEC along with *Rev. Sluss* were: Member-at-large — *Rev. Kenneth Hunn*, pastor of the Warsaw, Ind., First Brethren Church. Mideast Representative — *Virgil L. Barnhart*, member, deacon, and Sunday school teacher

at the Gratis, Ohio, Brethren Church. Eastern Representative — *Lois L. Hutzell*, member and Sunday school teacher at the St. James, Md., Brethren Church. In addition to these elected members, *Sherry Van Duyne*, member and Christian education coordinator of the Park Street Brethren Church, was appointed to fill a vacancy on GCEC as member-at-large.

**Special announcements.** Two items in the Ashland University report drew an enthusiastic response from delegates. The first was an announcement that the university is now officially a "dry" campus, where alcoholic beverages will not be sold or permitted. The second was the introduction of Dr. Michael Gleason as the newly appointed Director of Religious Life on campus. Dr. Gleason, until recently pastor of evangelism and outreach at Park Street Brethren Church, spoke briefly about the opportunities and challenges of Christian ministry on the AU campus. He was warmly applauded both when introduced and at the conclusion of his remarks.

On the other hand, delegates were saddened when *Rev. Marlin McCann*, who has served numerous years on the World Relief Board

## General Conference Report

and the last several as president of that board, announced during his board report that he had decided to step down from his involvement with World Relief. He was given a warm round of applause in appreciation for his many years of service.

**Gratitude.** Applause was likewise given for Charles Beekley, former Director of Christian Education for The Brethren Church. When Board of Christian Education president Dan Gray moved that the 101st General Conference publicly announce its gratitude for Charles Beekley's dedication and diligent work for The Brethren Church, delegates passed the motion with a round of applause.

**Budgets.** *Rev. Ronald W. Waters*, the new Director of Brethren Church Ministries, presented the proposed 1990 budgets for General Conference and for the National Office/Brethren Church Ministries. The General Conference budget projects income from credential fees of \$16,000 and from offerings of \$2,000 for a total of \$18,000 (\$496.51 less than was actually received in 1988). Anticipated expenses are \$17,975, \$25 less than anticipated receipts. The budget was approved.

In presenting the National Office/Brethren Church Ministries budget, *Rev. Waters* commented on its conjectural nature, since it is the first budget under the new denominational structure and includes income and expenses for ministries formally carried on by four different boards plus the National Office. Based on "fair share" support from churches of \$29 per Church Growth Index Point plus \$5.50 per CGIP for World Relief, the budget projects income of \$527,750 and expenses of \$527,180. It was approved by the Conference.

**1990 Conference.** At the conclusion of the Friday business session, 1989-90 moderator Dr. Mary Ellen Drushal announced that the theme of the 1990 Conference, to be held August 6-10 on the campus of Ashland University, will be "Be Authentic Disciples," based on John 15:5. Scheduled speakers are Ron Oertley and Frank R. Tillipaugh.

## Commission Members

For the first time ever, Conference delegates elected members to the eight new commissions created as a result of the denominational reorganization. Following are the eight commissions, a brief statement of their responsibilities, and the names of their newly-elected members.

**Leadership Development Commission** — to seek out and equip persons on behalf of the denomination who are called and gifted for leadership. Members: Tim Eagle, Lynne Lawson, Phil Lersch, William Shultz, Jenny Williams.

**Christian Education Commission** — to develop a program of Christian commitment of discipleship and nurture for all persons involved in Brethren churches. Members: Linda Barr, Kerry Scott, Jane Solomon, Ken Van Duyne, Glenn Black.

**Stewardship Commission** — to provide education and guidance in all areas of biblical stewardship. Members: Larry Baker, Dan Lawson, Tom Stoffer, Steve Williams, Amanda Moore.

**Worship Commission** — to inspire meaningful, appropriate worship of the triune God in public and in private.

Members: Susie Black, Julie Flora, Nancy Hunn, Dee Keplinger, Keith Stuart.

**Evangelism and Church Growth Commission** — to burden, stimulate, and equip Brethren people to share the good news of Jesus Christ through both words and action in obedience to His Word. Members: James F. Black, Keith Hensley, Dave Oligee, Doris Shultz, Lee Solomon.

**Church Relations Commission** — to seek out and develop mutually beneficial associations among Brethren churches and with other denominations of similar size and theology to ours. Members: Gerald Barr, Carolyn Cooksey, Warren Garner, Ralph Gibson, William Kerner.

**Social Responsibilities Commission** — to stimulate and equip Brethren people to become involved in knowing about and dealing with social issues. Members: Steve Barber, Harold Barnett, Jean Lersch, Doc Shank, Mark Logan.

**World Relief Commission** — to inform Brethren people of relief needs and stimulate them to involvement through giving and personal action. Members: David Benshoff, George Snyder, Harold Walton, Ronald L. Waters, Erica Weidenhamer.



# Brethren Inspirational Speakers

Three Brethren elders gave inspirational messages at Conference. Following are reviews of their addresses, written by three Conference reporters. The texts of the three messages will be printed in coming issues of the EVANGELIST.

## Rev. Brian H. Moore

The Thursday morning inspirational address by Rev. Brian Moore focused on the Conference theme, "Jesus Is Lord!" from a Brethren Church historical perspective.

In order to put the lordship of Jesus Christ in its proper perspective, Rev. Moore, pastor of the St. James, Md., Brethren Church, said that we must look at it three ways: (1) biblically (What does Scripture say about the lordship of Christ?); (2) historically (How is the lordship of Christ recognized and described in history?); and (3) contextually (the contemporary setting) (How is the lordship of Christ to be lived out in the church today?).

Rev. Moore reminded us that The Brethren Church sprang up during a period of tension over the relationship between church and state. The establishment of state churches had resulted in "easy believe-ism," which he called "cheap grace." Civil obedience was equated with obedience to God, resulting in a rather pagan environment.

The Anabaptist and Pietist movements out of which the Brethren Church grew were counter movements to the pagan environment of the church of that day. These movements called believers to be serious about the lordship of Christ. The term lordship, however, was seldom used; rather the term obedience was used, to emphasize the truth that lordship is not simply a concept, but something to be put into practice.

With this as background, Rev. Moore turned to the subject of baptism. He stated that baptism was, is, and ought to continue to be the focal point of the Brethren concept



of the lordship of Christ. Using a play on words, the speaker suggested that while some Brethren may feel because of all the past talk about baptism that they have been "baptized to death," this nevertheless needs to be literally

true in our spiritual lives. As Romans 6 teaches, we have been baptized into the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This being "baptized to death" is fundamentally to our understanding of the lordship of Christ.

Rev. Moore suggested that in today's church, we have too many little lords, such as Brethrenism, congregationalism, clericalism, deaconism, etc., all of which result in competition for our commitment and teach a justification without sanctification. Brother Moore closed by stating, "Let us as Brethren press on to know Jesus as Lord, and then practice what we know."

— Dr. Dan Lawson

## Rev. James F. Black

"The gosepl of Jesus Christ has such power to change lives that it's a crying shame more people aren't spreading it around." With this idea, Rev. James F. Black, pastor of the Gretna, Ohio, Brethren Church, introduced his Thursday evening General Conference sermon, "Praying for Laborers."

The sermon began with a description of the power generated in the 1983 volcanic eruption of Mount St. Helens. Illustrations followed about the power of the Christian message to alter human lives; for example, the 19th-century leader George Müller and several modern American instances. Con-

version may be immediate or it may be a process, but one experience is definite: When people remove themselves from the throne of their lives and yield to Jesus as Lord, positive things take place.

Turning to the need of praying for laborers, Elder Black reminded the audience of a Progressive Brethren motto from the turn of the century: "Seek to know the Lord and practice what you know." If we do the right things long enough, he said, we will see results.

More than anything else, the church needs field hands. It is God who must send them out, thrust them out, force them out. The Gretna pastor observed that programs and buildings are secondary



Rev. Black appealing for Brethren to answer God's call for laborers, with some of those who responded to the call standing behind him.

when compared to getting on with the harvest. The laborers are few because of our own prayerlessness. Rev. Black challenged the delegates to claim God's power by praying for laborers and proclaim God's power by becoming laborers.

At the conclusion of his stirring message, while the assembly sang "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus," 57 youth and adults stepped forward to register their decisions to become laborers in the harvest of the world.

— Dr. Jerry R. Flora

## Rev. Ronald W. Waters

"Give Me This Mountain" was the title of a Friday morning Conference message by Rev. Ronald W. Waters, in which he challenged us to examine our personal philosophy of life as well as that of our churches and our denomination.

Rev. Waters, who in July became Director of Brethren Church Ministries, began by taking us back 20 years to that day when we witnessed news in the making as we watched man take his first step on the moon. This was a seemingly impossible accomplishment.

Rev. Waters then took us to the 13th and 14th chapters of Numbers, where the people of Israel were asked to accomplish another seemingly impossible task — occupying the Promised Land. Twelve spies were sent into the land to bring back a report. The overwhelming majority of those spies said that it would be impossible for the Israelites to conquer the giants who inhabited that land. But Caleb, as well as Joshua, declared that the Lord would be able to bring this impossible thing about.

The speaker emphasized that many of us have adopted the attitude of Missouri, the "Show-Me State." We say, "I'll believe it when I see it." But in order to accomplish the will of the "God of possibilities," we must live with an "I'll-believe-it-before-I-see-it" attitude. We must believe that we can accomplish that which God wills for us to do in order to see it happen.

Rev. Waters further illustrated this point from the life of Caleb (Joshua 14:6-15). When the Israelites finally entered the Promised Land, Caleb went to Joshua to claim the hill country of Hebron, which the Lord had promised him 45 years earlier. Caleb said, "Give me this mountain," and he had the vision to believe that even though he was 85 years old, he would be



able to conquer the inhabitants of this mountain and to claim it as his own. Caleb believed it, and it came to pass.

As individuals, as churches, and as a denomination, we need to be like Caleb, the speaker said. We need to have a vision for the future and we must plan strategies in order to attain this vision.

We must not accept the status quo simply because it's the only way we know. Like Caleb, we must face the mountains in our personal lives, in our churches, and in our denomination, and we must have the vision that we can conquer them. We must believe it before we see it. We must realize that God is the Lord of past, the present, and the future. Like Caleb, we need to say, "Give me this mountain."

— Rev. Mark Britton

## Missionary Board Banquet

The admonition on the banner — "Proclaim Jesus Is Lord; Tell Others of His Love" — focused our thoughts on the theme of the annual Missionary Board banquet, held Thursday evening of Conference. A capacity crowd of 400 welcomed visiting Malaysian missionaries David and Jenny Loi and returned missionaries Mark and Chantal Logan and their children.

Enthusiastic applause of support was given to Home Mission pastors, special ministry personnel, former missionaries, parents of missionaries, Missionary Board staff, and board members, as they were introduced by Rev. James R. Black, executive director of the board. Rev. Black also recognized and expressed his appreciation to the Woman's Missionary Society and the Brethren Men of Mission for their ongoing mission vision.

David and Jenny Loi brought greetings, during which they expressed their thanks to the several churches that provided the funds to cover their travel costs, and their appreciation to the denomination as a whole for enabling them to serve in Malaysia and tell others of Jesus' love. They noted that be-

cause of government restrictions, their ministry is difficult and dangerous, and they appealed for and expressed appreciation for the continuing prayers of the Brethren.

Vanessa Oburn, who served as a BYC Intern in Mexico City this summer, sang two solos based on

(continued on page 19)



Missionaries David and Jenny Loi beneath the banquet banner, with Mrs. Russ (Sherry) Gordon (l.).



## National W.M.S. Sessions

"Jesus Is Lord — Rooted in Him" was the theme of the Woman's Missionary Society sessions at General Conference, with the emphasis on "Rooted in Him." This was the title of the theme song for the sessions (written by Dolly Zerbe and Janein Emily with music by Steve Zerbe), and also the focus of three devotional messages by Mrs. Zerbe.

In her first message, Mrs. Zerbe used a bouquet of cut flowers to illustrate that people cut off from Christ are dying and unproductive. In her second she used a pot of artificial flowers to demonstrate that people who are not rooted in Christ may appear beautiful, but they cannot grow or produce spiritual fruit. In her final talk, she used several plants she had dug up roots intact to illustrate that Christians rooted in Christ can grow in grace and produce much fruit. She encouraged the women to send their roots deep into Christ.

"Rooted in Him" was also the theme of an address by Linda Mirante of the Wabash, Ind., Joy Christian Bookstore and Choice Communications, at the W.M.S. luncheon on Thursday. She compared a spiritually dead person to

a dead tooth that requires root canal work. Just as the dentist must clean out the tooth, so we need to have the corruption removed from our lives. She warned against becoming an S.S.S. Christian, one who sits, soaks, and sours. We must be like Christ, who loved life and people.

Though her President's Challenge on Tuesday afternoon was titled "Home, Sweet Home," Donna Stoffer also related this to the W.M.S. theme. She reviewed some of her travels during the three years she has been president, including a recent trip to Israel, Egypt, and Greece. Commenting on the joy she and others experienced when they returned home from that trip, she noted that when Christ is our Lord and we are rooted in Him, *we are home*.

A memorial service for the 24 W.M.S. members who died during the past year was conducted by the Burlington, Ind., Society during the Wednesday session. Likening death to graduation, Cindy Stout placed a small basket of "diplomas" on a table and invited the societies of those ladies who had passed away to take one in remembrance.

The Project Ingathering was conducted by the Elkhart Society during the luncheon, with \$10,369.34 received for church planting in Mexico and the United States. The Johnstown Third Society conducted the Thank Offering Ingathering during the Thursday afternoon session, with \$9,152.57 received.

During the business sessions, raising money for church extension in Argentina and Paraguay was accepted as a two-year project. Becky Williams, an Ashland University senior from Roanoke, Ind., was announced as the 1989-90 recipient of the W.M.S. Scholarship.

Incumbent elected officers (president Donna Stoffer, vice-president Helen Dickson, financial secretary Joanne Kroft, and treasurer JoAnn Seaman) were all reelected. All appointed officers were likewise reappointed, except *Outlook* subscription secretary Bonnie Summy, who resigned after seven years of service. Jessie Solomon was appointed to this position, and Ginny Hoyt was appointed to fill the position of assistant treasurer, which became vacant when JoAnn Seaman took over as treasurer following the death of Dorothy Carpenter earlier in the year.

A total of 134 delegates, 18 officers, and 127 guests attended the W.M.S. sessions.

*Written by the editor from Secretary Trudy Kerner's minutes.*

## Brethren Men of Mission

The name of the National Laymen's Organization is now Brethren Men of Mission and the primary focus of the organization is Brethren Home Missions, as a result of the adoption of a new constitution by the men during their sessions at General Conference.

In addition to adopting a new constitution, the 72 delegates to the sessions elected officers, set goals for the coming year, ingathered \$1,975 in project money, cared for other business, and were inspired by messages from their daily speakers.

Rev. Leroy Solomon, pastor of the Winding Waters Brethren Church, Elkhart, Ind., asked "Why

Are You Here?" during the Tuesday afternoon session. He stated that their purpose must be to make disciples (Matt. 28:18-20), which includes both evangelism and teaching. Making disciples, he said, entails personal involvement with others over an extended period of time and requires honesty, mutual support, equal respect, and must allow room for individualism.

On Tuesday morning, Dr. Michael Gleason, the new director of religious life at Ashland University, directed the men to think about how they invest their time. Reminding them that only what's done for Christ will last, he asked, "How would you live in 1989 if you

knew you were going to be called home by next January 1?"

Rev. Duane Dickson, pastor of the Huntington, Ind., First Brethren Church, addressed a joint session of laymen and pastors Thursday afternoon following the men and boys' picnic. He emphasized the importance of pastors and laymen working together in the church, stating that pastors need the help of the laymen. He challenged the men to reach their potential for Christ, noting that the church needs people who are on fire for the Lord.

In the laymen's own session that followed, Rev. Buck Garrett, pastor of the Dutchtown, Ind., Brethren

Church, spoke to the men about becoming involved in volunteer work teams to help construct church buildings. He showed photographs of church structures that had been built this way noting that there was a 40 to 50 percent savings in cost. The men were then given an opportunity to sign up for such "barnraising" teams.

Rev. Russell Gordon, the new director of Home Missions and Church Growth, also addressed the men. He expressed his excitement about their new emphasis on Home Missions and pledged his support and that of the Missionary Board.

The newly elected officers of Brethren Men of Mission are Ken Van Duyne (pres.-elect), Robert Crowe (sec.), Eugene Robbins (asst. sec.), Virgil Barnhart (treas.), and Stanley Gentle (asst. treas.). Jim



*Approximately 175 laymen, pastors, boys (and a few girls) enjoyed a chicken barbecue picnic at the lunch hour on Thursday.*

*Photo by Rev. David Lol.*

Ford, this past year's president-elect, is the new president.

Don Kelley was designated to receive the organization's Ashland Theological Seminary Brethren

Student Scholarship for the coming year. Goals achievement awards were presented to the Vinco Brethren Church (Mineral Point, Pa.) and the Nappanee, Ind., First Brethren Church.

*Written by the editor from minutes taken by Secretary Robert D. Crowe.*

## National Elders Association

Brief devotional messages got each session of the National Association of Brethren Church Elders off to an inspirational start at General Conference. On Tuesday, Pastor David Benshoff stressed the importance of prayer as he urged the pastors to complete the circle of prayer. On Wednesday Pastor Gene Eckerley asked, "Where is the Joy?" and suggested ways from I John 1 of maintaining the joy of Christian service. And on Thursday Pastor Darrell Crissman used the parable of the talents as a basis for a challenge to avoid half-hearted service for the Lord.

Most of the Tuesday session was turned over to Robert Meeder, Jr., representing R. Meeder & Associates, which manages the Brethren Retirement Fund. Mr. Meeder explained how money in the fund is invested, noting that despite a loss in 1988, the fund has had an average gain over the past 14 years of more than 17% per year.

During the Wednesday morning session, National Brethren Youth Moderator Mark Ray addressed the association. He appealed for churches to give youth opportunities to serve, stressed the

necessity of helping youth feel needed and loved in the church, and emphasized the importance of registering local youth groups with National BYC.

Also during this session Pastor Russell King gave a brief report of the 1989 pastors conference. Then Pastor Doc Shank announced that the 1990 conference would be held April 17-19 at the Northern Virginia 4-H Educational Center near Front Royal, Va. The theme will be "The Church of the Nineties." It was also announced that the 1991 pastors conference will be held in the Central District.

Most of the Thursday afternoon session was spent in caring for remaining business. In addition, Rev.

### Missions Banquet

*(continued from page 17)*  
the missionary theme.

Rev. Russell Gordon, the new director of Home Missions and Church Growth for the Missionary Board, then challenged the audience with a message from Mark 16:15. He reported that three billion people in the world are unreached with the gospel of Jesus Christ, with 150,000 being added

Ronald W. Waters, Director of Brethren Church Ministries, highlighted the planning conference to be held in November. During both the Wednesday and Thursday sessions memorials were read for elders who had died during the previous year and a half, including Brothers Henry Bates, Louis Engle, and L.V. King.

In the annual election of officers, president Richard Craver, vice-president Doc Shank, secretary-treasurer Gerald Barr, and assistant secretary-treasurer Dan Lawson were all reelected to their respective positions. It was announced that Tim Eagle would receive the Brethren Student Scholarship during the 1989-90 school year.

to that number daily. In order to reach these billions with the message of Christ's love, we need *men and women* with a *method* of action, who are *motivated* to go, and the *money* to send them.

Rev. Gordon concluded his message by encouraging each one to pray daily, "Lord Jesus, put me where I am needed to do what you want me to do."

— Joan Ronk



## Pennsylvania Conference Revises District's Position on Baptism

**Meyersdale, Pa.** — After several years of discussion on the subject, delegates to the 99th Conference of the Pennsylvania District, held July 20-22 at Camp Peniel, voted to change the district's position on baptism.

The conference amended the district constitution to grant churches the option of accepting individuals into membership who have been previously baptized by any form of believer's immersion. Formerly, only those baptized by trine immersion could be received. This action, which was supported by 78 percent of those voting, brings the district into line with similar action taken by General Conference in 1978.

Seventy-nine delegates registered

for the conference, with additional guests present for many of the sessions. Most of the other business was routine, but Moderator Carl Phillips, pastor of the Vinco Brethren Church, frequently injected humorous comments to make the sessions enjoyable.

General Conference Moderator Kenneth Sullivan was the inspirational speaker for the gathering. He spoke three times on the district theme — "Renaissance in Brethren Life" — and once on the General Conference theme. Addresses were also presented by Rev. Phillips and by district Moderator-Elect Jamie Kridler of the Pleasant View Brethren Church (Vandergrift).

The Summer Crusader musical

team "Witness" provided a musical program Thursday evening. Friday night the district laymen's organization hosted a service of sacred music, with congregational singing and special numbers provided by groups from various churches.

The district Board of Christian Education hosted a "Church Growth Through the Sunday School" workshop Thursday at the camp prior to the beginning of the conference. The workshop was presented by Ronald W. Waters, Director of Brethren Church Ministries for The Brethren Church, with 25 attending.

Randy Best, pastor of the Pittsburgh church, was selected moderator-elect for 1989-90. Mr. Kridler became moderator at the end of the conference.

The 100th Pennsylvania District Conference is scheduled for July 19-21, 1990, at Camp Peniel.

— reported by Ronald W. Waters

## Sarasota Says "Thank You" to St. Clair and Polly Benshoff

**Sarasota, Fla.** — Interim pastor is a term that has come to be synonymous in The Brethren Church with the name Rev. St. Clair Benshoff. The Sarasota First Brethren Church was the recipient of Rev. and Mrs. Benshoff's love, dedication, and wisdom for nearly a year.

Rev. Benshoff was to assume the pulpit as interim pastor on April 3, 1988, immediately following the retirement of Dr. J.D. Hamel, our minister of 28 years. But Brother Benshoff was sidelined by a heart attack that did not permit him to begin until June 15, 1988.

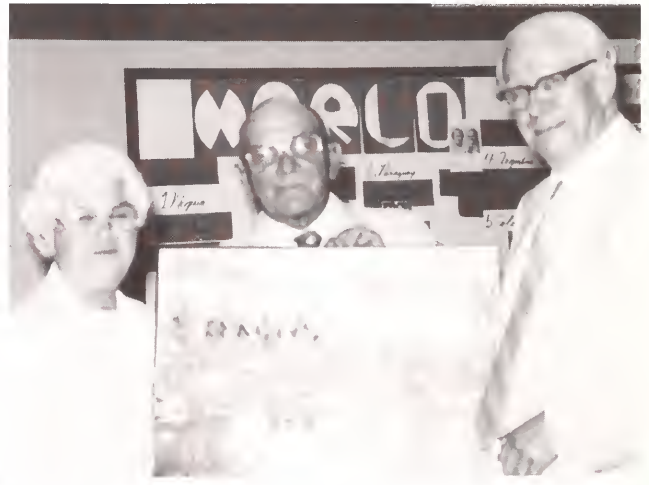
He and Polly arrived with fervor and a desire to serve for approximately three to four months. But that time extended into a year, as the pulpit committee continued to pray and to search for a new minister.

During their time with us, we grew to love the Benshoffs and to admire them for the sacrifice they had made to leave home, family, and friends to come to the field to serve where the Lord had led. They became even more special to us as we banded together in unified prayer for Polly and St. Clair when they were hospitalized.

It goes without saying that the Sarasota Brethren Church is not alone as it goes through a pastoral metamorphosis, for the Elkhart First Brethren

*On behalf of the  
Sarasota First  
Brethren Church,  
Vice-Moderator  
Eugene Robbins (c.)  
presents a painting  
by Sarasota member  
Cheryle Carter to  
Pastor St. Clair  
and Polly Benshoff.*

*Photo by LaVergne Stone.*



Church has also made an adjustment as its pastor, Rev. Daniel Gray, came to Florida to take command of the pulpit vacated by Rev. Benshoff.

To honor and thank Pastor and Polly for their spiritual guidance this past year, a carry-in dinner was held Sunday, June 25. That same evening members of Sarasota First Brethren representing the various boards and organizations of the church had an opportunity to express their thanks to the Benshoffs. A picture painted by member Cheryle Carter was presented on behalf of the church to Pastor and Polly as a remembrance of their time spent among us.

A mini-concert by the Benshoffs and a mini-sermon, "Last Words," by Pastor were a part of our concluding serv-

ice together. After the service, a time of fellowship with coffee, punch, and cookies was held to give everyone an opportunity to say "thanks" in an informal setting.

The departure of the Benshoffs proved most difficult, for we grew to love and honor them. We now regard them as Sarasota Brethren.

If their record remains true, they will pack up and head out without hesitation when another need arises and the Lord calls. Another church will be added to the family of congregations blessed by their presence.

The First Brethren Church of Sarasota, Fla., extends its deepest gratitude to both St. Clair and Polly for their devotion and love.

— Billie Barth, correspondent

## Carl Mark Phillips Ordained an Elder July 30th at Vinco Brethren Church

**Mineral Point, Pa.** — Carl Mark Phillips was ordained an elder in the Brethren Church and his wife, Deanna, was consecrated the wife of

an elder in a service held July 30 at the Vinco Brethren Church.

Dr. Harold Barnett, pastor of the Hagerstown, Md., First Brethren

Church, gave the message for the service. Other Brethren elders participating were the new elder's father, Rev. Carl H. Phillips, pastor of the Vinco Church; Rev. Robert Hoffman; and Rev. C. William Cole.

Also participating in the service were Deanna's mother, Mrs. Harvey (LaRue) Holsoapple, Vinco Church secretary; and Deanna's great-grandfather, Herbert Livingston, a retired pastor. Special music was presented by the Vinco Church choir.

The new Brethren elder is a graduate of Central Cambria High School, Ebensburg, Pa., and received a bachelor of science degree in accounting from the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. He also attended Biblical Seminary, Hatfield, Pa., from which he received master of divinity and master of arts degrees in 1988.

Since July 1988, Rev. Phillips has served as pastor of the North Liberty, Ind., First Brethren Church.

— reported by Barbara A. Hagerich



*Laying hands on Rev. and Mrs. Carl M. Phillips are (l. to r.) Rev. Robert Hoffman, Rev. Herbert Livingston, Rev. C. William Cole, Rev. Carl H. Phillips, and Dr. Harold Barnett.*

## Rev. Fredric G. Miller Installed July 30th As Pastor of Mt. Olive Brethren Church

**McGaheysville, Va.** — Rev. Fredric G. Miller was installed Sunday, July 30, as pastor of the Mt. Olive Brethren Church of Pineville, Va.

One hundred fifty-seven members and friends of the congregation attended the installation service and carry-in luncheon that followed to welcome Pastor Miller, his wife, Pam, and their sons, David and Andrew, to the Mt. Olive Church.

Alvin Vann from the Maurertown Brethren Church, a member of the Southeastern District Board of Spiritual Oversight, officiated at the service. Worship leader was William Rodgers, Jr., a lay pastor in the Mt. Olive Church. Mt. Olive moderator Odessa Shelton received Pastor Miller on behalf of the congregation. Kris and Lori Morris sang "Household of Faith."

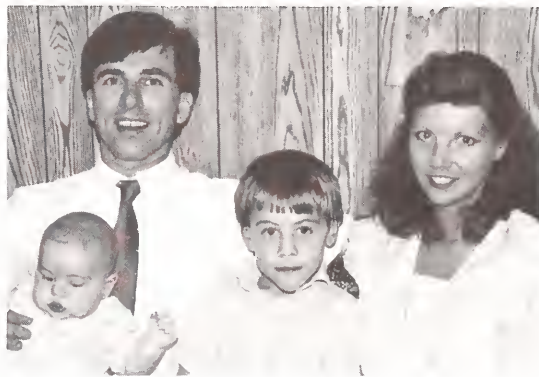
Guest speaker for the service was Rev. Brian Moore, pastor of the St. James, Md., Brethren Church, who spoke on "The Measure of the Ministry." Using Colossians 1:24—2:5 as his text, Rev. Moore highlighted the characteristics, challenges, and pleasures of serving a church congregation.

Among the visitors attending the service were Pastor Miller's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Fredric Miller, Sr., his sister Debbie and Tiffany.

Rev. Miller, 31, grew up in the Brush Valley Brethren Church,

Adrian, Pa., and attended Penn State University (B.A. degree) and Ashland Theological Seminary (M. Div. degree). He pastored five years at the North Bend Church of the Brethren, Danville, Ohio, and two years at the Brush Valley Brethren Church before accepting a call to the Mt. Olive Church.

— reported by Odessa Shelton, moderator



*Pastor Fred Miller with wife, Pam, and sons David (7) and Andrew (6 months).*

## Dr. Michael F. Gleason Named Dir. of Religious Life at A.U.

**Ashland, Ohio** — Dr. Michael F. Gleason has been named Director of Religious Life at Ashland University.

In his new position, Gleason, who from 1984 through August 1989 was pastor of evangelism and discipleship at Park Street Brethren Church, will serve the pastoral needs of Ashland University students, faculty, and staff. He will direct Hope Fellowship, hold a weekly Protestant worship service, and facilitate retreats, Bible studies, and other activities.

A native of Pittsford, N.Y., Gleason, 36, attended Ashland University, from which he received a B.A. degree in religion in 1975. He became a Chris-

tian while a student at the university, then later, while attending Ashland Theological Seminary, served the university as campus minister.

Gleason received a master of divinity degree in (continued on next page)



*Dr. Michael F. Gleason*



## From The



## Grape Vine

On August 28, the Superior Court of Pennsylvania upheld a 1987 Cambria County court decision in favor of The Brethren Church and the Benevolent Board, in the lawsuit brought by L. Robert Kimball concerning a proposed retirement home in the Pennsylvania District. The court, however, ruled for a new trial against James I. Mackall of Vinco, Pa., in the lawsuit. Date for that trial has not been set.

**Kathryn Marsh** was omitted from the list of Brethren students who re-

### Michael Gleason

(continued from previous page)

Christian education from ATS in 1978 and also has a doctor of ministry degree in church renewal from the seminary, which he received last year.

In addition to his years at Park Street Brethren Church, Gleason served as director of Christian education at the Winding Waters Brethren Church, Elkhart, Ind., from 1978-80 and as pastor of the Pleasant View Brethren Church, Vandergrift, Pa., from 1980-84.

Gleason and his wife, Sheila, have two children, Hannah (11) and Sara (8).

ceived degrees from Ashland University in May, when that list was printed in the July/August EVANGELIST. Kathryn, a member of the Pittsburgh, Pa., First Brethren Church and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Marsh, received a Bachelor of Science in Education degree. (Our apologies to Kathryn.)

**Steven McKee, Bennie Gatto, and Mac Freeman**, all of whom attend the Lathrop, Calif., Brethren Church, are members of the City of Lathrop's first-ever city council. Furthermore, Mr. McKee is the city's first mayor, and Mr. Gatto is its first vice-mayor. Lathrop was incorporated as a city on June 1 of this year, and the new five-person city council was sworn into office on July 25.

### In Memory

**Jesse Harp**, 94, August 15. Member of The Brethren Church in New Lebanon. Services by Pastor Robert Dillard.

**Faith Fink**, 65, August 7. Member of the Milledgeville Brethren Church. Services by Associate Pastor Bill Shipman.

**Ethel Peck**, 99, August 6. Member and deaconess of the Falls City First Brethren Church. Services by Rev. Paul Wienert.

**Weatha Moredock**, 78, August 3. Member for 22 years of the Masontown Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Russell King.

**Gerald E. (Jay) Eastabrooks**, 47, July 20. Member of the Milledgeville Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Kenneth Sullivan.

**William F. Dutchess**, 80, July 15. Charter member of the Kokomo First Brethren Church, where he served as deacon (35 years), financial secretary, and moderator. He also served on the board of directors of the Brethren's Home of Indiana. Services by Pastor Mark Bendes.

**Ada Tobias**, 81, July 10. Member of The Brethren Church in New Lebanon. Services by Pastor Robert Dillard.

**Carson Metz**, 81, June 30. Lifelong member and deacon emeritus of the St. James Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Brian H. Moore.

**Lillian M. Smith**, 92, June 28. Member of the Milledgeville Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Kenneth Sullivan.

**Mary Reshke**, 60, June 3. Faithful member of the Falls City First Brethren Church, which she served as pianist/organist and Sunday school teacher. Services by Pastor Curt Nies and Rev. Dave Manning.

**Mary Elizabeth (Betty) Bird**, 72, May 3. Faithful member of the Berlin Brethren Church, where she served as deaconess and Sunday school teacher. Services by Pastor Ralph Mills.

**Effie Teeter**, 72, April 12. Lifelong member of the Johnstown Third Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Jerald Radcliff.

### Weddings

**Tina Jo Schryver** to **Jerry J. Mekeel**, August 26, at the Milledgeville Brethren Church; Pastor Ken Sullivan officiating. Bride a member of the Milledgeville Brethren Church.

**Onalee Madren** to **Steven Clingenpeel**, August 19. Groom a member of the Flora First Brethren Church.

**Maria Hukill** to **Bill Stombaugh**, August 19, in Bryan, Ohio; Fred Brandon officiating. Groom a member of the Bryan First Brethren Church.

**Christy Grayson** to **David Birnell**, August 5, at the Loree Brethren Church; Pastor Claude Stogsdill officiating. Groom a member of the Loree Brethren Church.

**Sandra Kay Phillips** to **Gregory Linton**, August 5, at the Vinco Brethren Church; Pastor Carl H. Phillips officiating. Bride a member of the Vinco Brethren Church.

**Sheri McClinsey** to **Arthur DeSalvo**, July 29, at the Vinco Brethren Church; Pastor Carl H. Phillips officiating. Bride a member of the Vinco Brethren Church.

**Lee Ann Carmel** to **Brian Overdorf**, July 22, at the Vinco Brethren Church; Pastor Carl H. Phillips officiating.

**Jeanine K. Hoskins** to **Kevin Eppens**, July 14, at the Waterloo First Brethren Church; Pastor Lynn Mercer officiating. Bride a member of the Waterloo First Brethren Church.

**Michele Corbo** to **Mark Combs**, July 8, at The Brethren Church in New Lebanon; Pastor Robert Dillard officiating, assisted by Charles Wilttrout. Members of The Brethren Church in New Lebanon.

### Goldenaires

**Robert and Mary Ellen Miller**, 50th, September 24. Members of the Roann First Brethren Church.

**Delbert and Romayne Flora**, 60th, September 2. Members of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church.

**Maynard and Doris Peugeot**, 50th, September 2. Members of the Bryan First Brethren Church.

**Ancil and Lois Maxwell**, 50th, August 11. Members of the Flora First Brethren Church.

**Mr. and Mrs. Weldon Worl**, 55th, August 11. Members of the Loree Brethren Church.

**Woodrow and Marie Robertson**, 50th, July 14. Woodrow a member of the St. James Brethren Church.

**Richard and Rose Lewis**, 50th, June 4. Members of the Tiosa Brethren Church.

### Membership Growth


**Valley:** 6 by baptism

**Oakville:** 6 by baptism, 5 by transfer

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# Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).



## WHAT MAKES YOU SPECIAL?

Do you know who made you? Maybe you're saying, "Oh, that's easy. God made me, of course!" You would be right. If you read Psalm 139 in your Bible, you will learn just how closely God is involved in making each one of us.

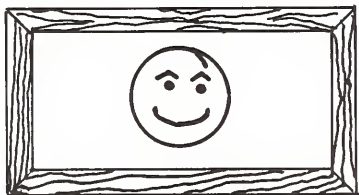
But if you know who made you, do you also know that those whom God has made **belong** to God? We are His, and He is ours, too. We belong together.

Over and over the stories in the Bible show us how God longs for us to have that "togetherness" with Him that He created us to have. All through the history of His people God has been reaching out to us.

The greatest proof of God's longing for us is God's Son, Jesus. God sent Jesus to be born into our world, to live and hurt as we do, and even to take the punishment for our sins for all time by His death on the cross. Jesus did all this to return us to that closeness with God we were created to share. He did it because God finds us precious and valuable beyond price.

Nothing anyone says or does to you can cheapen your value to God. Nothing that you do or say can ever separate you from the love of God. "Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God" (Ephesians 5:1-2, *NIV*). You are special!

**Mirror, Mirror, on the Wall,  
I'm a Kid of the King of All**



Look at yourself in a mirror and see how "wonderfully and fearfully" made you are! Look carefully at your face, your hair, your fingers and toes. How amazingly we are "put together"! We breathe, our heart beats, and all our organs work inside us to keep us well. We are like fantastic machines, in which every part down to the smallest cell is alive! Take time to thank God for a body, mind, heart, and soul with which to love and serve Him.

## What Can I Do?

Many people (both kids and grown-ups) don't know that God loves them. They may feel sad. They may try to feel special by:

- doing things to get noticed.
- only being interested in money and in buying things.
- always wanting to be the prettiest, smartest, meanest, funniest, silliest, or other -est words.

Everyone needs to be reminded that it is because **God** thinks we are special that we **are** special. We don't have to do anything for God to love us.

Invite a friend to church so that your friend can learn about God's love for him or her.

## An Important Question

Why should we get plenty of exercise, eat right, wash well, and brush our teeth? Find I Corinthians 6:19-20 in a New International Version of the Bible and fill in the blanks below.

"DO YOU NOT \_\_\_\_\_ THAT YOUR \_\_\_\_\_ IS A \_\_\_\_\_ OF THE \_\_\_\_\_, WHO IS IN YOU, WHOM YOU HAVE RECEIVED FROM GOD? YOU ARE NOT \_\_\_\_\_; YOU WERE \_\_\_\_\_ AT A \_\_\_\_\_. THEREFORE \_\_\_\_\_ GOD WITH YOUR \_\_\_\_\_."



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# THE BRETHREN **Evangelist**

OCTOBER 1989







# the salt shaker

by Alvin Shifflett

## Warts and Christians

**T**HE SUBJECT is warts — those unsightly growths famous for perching on witches' noses and for tormenting a lot of ordinary folks. Untold millions of just plain folks (myself included) have been dealing with warts for centuries. And over the years they've come up with more folksy cures than you can shake a stick at. For example, I once heard that if you cut one notch in a stick of persimmon wood for every wart that you have, that those warts should clear right up.

The odd thing is, some of those folk cures work. Notice I said *some*. Most don't!

### A plague of warts

I began to learn about warts as a teenager. I got up one morning and discovered the beginning of what turned out to be a plague of warts. It got to the point that I was afraid that if the warts were allowed to continue — to run rampant in my body without being checked — I'd become one giant wart with two tiny legs — a creature fit only for a Stephen King movie!

Something had to be done. So I went to a medical doctor. He gave me some medication that didn't work. The warts just began to multiply — all over my hands and knees.

I became desperate, and as you know, desperate people do desperate and stupid things. I began trying all the folksy cures I could learn about — persimmon sticks, dirty rags, early morning dew, the works. Noth-

ing arrested this attack upon my body. It was depressing to say the least.

Then I met my future father-in-law. When he saw the warts on my hands and the heavy burden I carried, he boldly pronounced with evangelical enthusiasm, "I can take those warts off!"

Oh yeah?" I said. "What are you, another one of these Valley witch doctors? I've tried all of those phony methods; nothing works."

He laughed and replied, "Those things don't work. But I can take them off, that is, if you're willing to withstand some pain." Now I could see that he was speaking with confidence and was quite serious about this matter.

No pain, no gain," I stated with trepidation. "As long as you don't cut off my hand."

"If your hand offends you, maybe it *should* be cut off," he said. I could see he was a legalistic deacon!

### It worked!

Now this may come as a surprise to you, but he did take off my warts. Well, at least one of them — the big one, where they first started. He called it the "Mother wart."

Funny thing about warts: do away with the "Mother wart" and the others disappear. It's weird, but true, for within two months all my other warts pulled a disappearing act. I was elated . . . and cleansed!

There is a connection, you know, between wart-removers and Chris-

tians. Wart-removers can't stand warts. A genuine, died-in-the-wool wart-remover, upon seeing a warty hand extended, is under obligation to say, "I can see you have warts. Would you like them removed?"

Few people say, "Oh, no, I like my warts. I hope they spread!"

### How did he do it?

Now I know you're waiting for me to tell you how my father-in-law delivered me from warts. Sorry, I can only relate that to my patients. For you see, now I'm carrying on the family tradition. I, too, am a wart-remover.

I've taken warts off registered nurses, waitresses, professional people of all stripes, as well as blue-collar workers. Wherever there's a need; whenever a warty hand is extended to me, I see an opening. "Would you like deliverance?" I ask. "I can show you the way."

Our daughter, a recently graduated registered nurse, is also a "professional" wart-remover. This is something you pass along.

Now do you see what I mean about wart-removers and Christians? Do you need deliverance? [†]

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# THE BRETHREN Evangelist

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## Cover

Autumn scene on the Ashland University campus, with the Arts and Humanities building in the background. More than the name has changed at this institution. See the "Ministry Pages" (12-15) for information about the schools "New Beginnings" and its "New Look."

**Change in Children's Page Location.** With this issue, the "Little Crusader" page is being moved from page 23 (inside the back cover) to page 21. This is being done in order to include some color on the page. Page 21 is printed in the same press run as the cover, and since color is used on the cover, it can be added to this page as well.

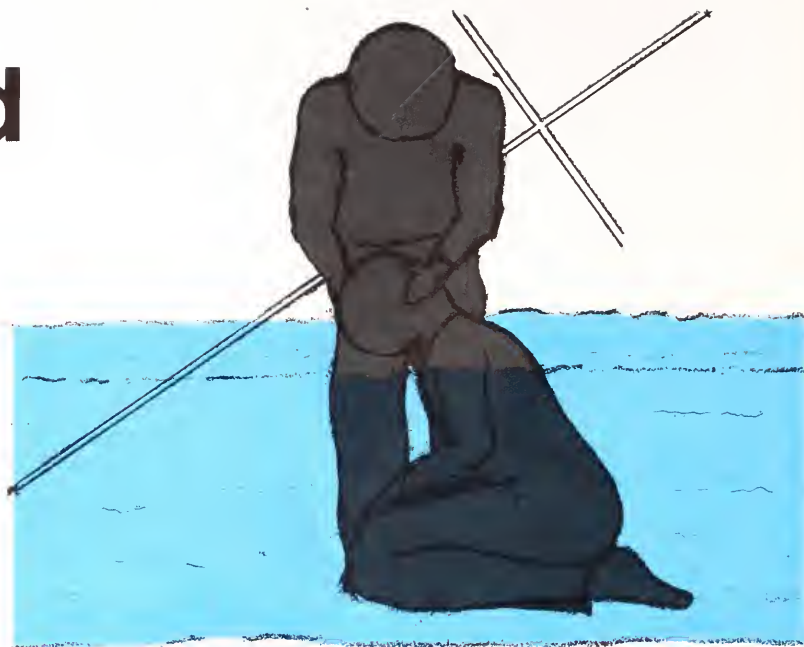
## Answers to Little Crusader Page:

Why God Made Us: "We are His workmanship created for good works in Christ . . ."



# Baptized to Death!

By Brian H. Moore



ONE of the little gems I received from doing committee work with Dr. Dale Stoffer, Dr. Jerry Flora, and others was this astute observation: If you are going to do proper interpretive work in and for the church, you must consider three important factors — the biblical, the historical, and the contextual. You must deal with the text, obviously; but you must also consider the historical development and practice in your tradition; and you must consider the present situation. I intend to utilize these three dimensions as we pursue the subject of the Lordship of Jesus Christ as it is set in the Brethren movement.

## I. Historically

The Brethren movement began in a culture that was strongly influenced by the union of state and church. Religion and politics were deeply intertwined, far more so than anything we Americans can begin to realize. We wrestle with the interrelationship of church and state, but in 1708 and the years prior to that date such tensions as we experience were entirely unknown.

The result of that union of church and state was a culture of indiffer-

ence toward the things of God, an "easy believism," something that was later called "cheap grace." People gained a false sense of security about their relationship to God because citizenship in a kingdom on earth was equated with citizenship in the Kingdom of Heaven. Little or no moral obligation was required of a person beyond mere obedience to the state. Civil obedience was equated with godly obedience.

Such a system, of course, bred corruption. True spirituality was rare. Conversions to Christ were uncommon.

Into this practically pagan environment came countermovements initiated by people who began to get serious about the Scriptures and about Jesus Christ. The **Pietists** created a sensitivity toward the converted life, the inner life before God and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The **Anabaptists** (forerunners of the modern Mennonite groups) left their mark by emphasizing the called-out and covenanting community, the voluntary body of those who choose to follow Christ daily in their lives.

The Brethren fathers and mothers were heirs to both these emphases. They took the inner-life emphasis of the Pietists and the radical, open-discipleship emphasis of the Anabaptists (that is, their view of the nature of the church) and com-

bined them into a new movement relevant to their time and place.

The early Brethren were serious about the Lordship of Jesus Christ! They didn't use that expression, but the idea it embodies is obvious in their scant writings. To be serious about the Lordship of Christ meant for them a seriousness about Scripture. They viewed the Scriptures, especially the New Testament, as the revelation of the mind of Christ. Therefore, to live under His lordship was to take Scripture seriously. So, while the term "Lordship of Christ" is rare in Brethren writings, the word "obedience" is found everywhere! Lordship was not a nice-sounding theological idea; it was something meant to be practiced.

This point of view led, then, to the literal practices of the Brethren. "If Jesus said it or the New Testament teaches it, then let's do it," they reasoned. So we have such things as non-retaliation, non-swearing, foot-washing, love feast, the laying on of hands, anointing with oil, the holy kiss and, preeminently, *the Brethren emphasis on baptism*. The Brethren, from the beginning, had a certain fascination with baptism. It became a part of their identity: Fraternity of German Baptist Brethren, Dunkers, and like names.

Perhaps Brethren in the last quarter of the twentieth century are tired of hearing about baptism. We

*Rev. Moore is senior pastor of the St. James, Md., Brethren Church. This article is a message Rev. Moore delivered at General Conference.*

***"The Brethren loved baptism because it, more than anything else, objectively portrayed that act of death and of rising again to life in the new world, a world where Jesus is Lord."***

have had it up to here with baptism! We have been "baptized to death!"

By contrast, the old books and pamphlets defended baptism by trine immersion, promoted baptism, argued about it (sometimes uncharitably, I think). Whatever else may have been the subject, baptism always seemed to find its way into the discussion.

Why was this so? Was it merely because baptism was something different, something that set us apart from other Christian groups? I don't think this is the whole answer. Rather, it was because *baptism was, and still is, the focal point of the Brethren emphasis on the Lordship of Christ.*

Harold Bender, an Anabaptist scholar, could well have been speaking for the Brethren when he wrote, "Baptism, the greatest of the Christian symbols, was accordingly to be for [the early Anabaptists] the 'covenant of a good conscience toward God' (I Peter 3:21, Luther), the pledge of a complete commitment to obey Christ . . ." (*The Anabaptist Vision*, p. 14) That is what the Brethren were on to historically: baptism was the occasion when a person expressed his new allegiance to a new Lord. It was a covenant of lordship. It was the initiation into following that Lord, the beginning of a new life in a new kingdom, under a new Master.

## **II. Biblically**

The early Brethren arrived at this conclusion about baptism by searching the Scriptures. They found that baptism was a lot like the ships of Solomon that bore all manner of precious cargo. Baptism bears all manner of precious meanings. I will isolate two as they pertain to our subject.

First, baptism means submission. In Romans 6:1 Paul anticipated a question that people would ask, a question likely to arise from his prior discussion (in Romans 1-5) of the way of salvation. The question:

"If we are no longer under the law but under grace, why not sin, because sin would invite further grace?"

Paul replies, if I might freely paraphrase him, "That's a stupid question!" Why is it a stupid question? Because we have submitted to a new ruler. Baptism affirms that! Baptism is a declaration of a transfer of allegiance. The Brethren loved to talk (and argue) about baptism because it, more than anything else, objectively portrayed submission to a new Lord. We bow forward to Him in submission!

Second, baptism means death. Again, if I may paraphrase Paul: "That question about sinning is a stupid question because dead people don't ask those kinds of questions!" Baptism is a dividing point between the living and the dead, between the old world and the new world. To be caught up in sin is a characteristic of the old world; to live for Christ is a mark of the new world. Baptism means death to the old. So we are buried with Him in baptism — baptized to death!

The Brethren loved baptism because it, more than anything else, objectively portrayed that act of death and of rising again to life in the new world, a world where Jesus is Lord.

William Willimon, a Methodist, is not far from Brethren thinking when he writes, "Baptism is not the water that washes but the flood that drowns. Discipleship is more than turning over a new leaf. It is nothing less than daily death." (*The Service of God*, p. 111.)

## **III. Contextually**

I believe that Dr. Jerry Flora was precise and accurate when he stated at the 1988 General Conference, "If The Brethren Church is to move ahead into the future, it will do so by recapturing its heritage from the past." The activists among us are saying, "We must *do* something!" The philosophers among us are say-

ing, "We can't do something until we *become* something!" Something must happen at the core of our life before we can express a full and robust discipleship.

From my perspective, that something is the recovery of the Lordship of Jesus Christ as a fact of life, personally and in our churches. We have too many little "lords." Brethrenism could be one of them. A congregationalism gone carnal is another. Clericalism (pastor trying to be Lord) is yet another — pastors are called to be *undershepherds*, not *underlords*. And what about "deaconism"?

The crown of lordship is a very large one; there is only One whose brow it will fit! Carl George said, concerning church struggles and conflicts: "The issues are never the issue. Control is the issue." (*Leadership*, Summer 1989, Vol. X, No. 3, p. 32.) These are some internal issues facing us, vying against the Lordship of Christ.

We face some other formidable foes. We must, for instance, compete for the commitment of life. "The religious marketplace is crowded," states Willimon (p. 111). No longer is the Christian message the sole entree.

We also fight a sickly sentimentalism both within and outside the church: "Wouldn't it be nice if little Johnny got baptized?" the parents or grandparents of little Johnny ask, not realizing the implications of that choice. In fact, it is quite often *their* choice, not little Johnny's.

Cheap grace and easy believism live on in our day: a crown without a cross; decisions without discipleship; justification without sanctification. J.I. Packer calls it, "Hot Tub Religion," offering the comforts without the cost.

Quoting Willimon again: "We must cease promiscuous baptism. It is dishonest, if not downright cruel, to entice people [by whatever means, especially the cheap price tag] to

*(continued on page 9)*





*Lighting the Lausanne in Manila Flame. The torch used to light the flame had been carried through 50 nations by hundreds of young people of many races during the 15 months before the Congress.*

## LAUSANNE II in Manila

A report on the International Congress on World Evangelization, held July 11-20 in Manila, the Philippines — by Juan Carlos Miranda.

**F**OUR THOUSAND Christian leaders from 190 nations (more countries than are represented in the United Nations) gathered July 11-20 in Manila, the Philippines, for the International Congress on World Evangelization. They came to study and discuss ways to spread the gospel more effectively in order to share the message of our Lord Jesus Christ around the world.

María and I were privileged to participate in this great evangelical congress. Even though we were not representing The Brethren Church officially, we feel that as missionaries of our denomination, we always represent it in one way or another. It was our pleasure to do so in Manila.

Attendants at the Congress were saddened by the fact that 300 representatives from China who had planned to attend the Congress were not allowed to do so because of the recent events in Tiananmen Square in Beijing. Yet we rejoiced that 66

representatives from the Soviet Union (including three women) were there, even though they arrived a few days late. One of the leaders from the Russian Orthodox Church said, "There is no nation in the world so ready to receive the Christian faith as the Soviet Union."

The central theme of the Congress — "Proclaim Christ Until He Comes: Calling the Whole Church to Take the Whole Gospel to the Whole World" — expresses the future direction of the Lausanne movement, which sponsored the gathering. A fervent appeal was made to all Christians, both pastors and lay persons, to fulfill their responsibility to evangelize the whole world and to do so with sacrifice, commitment, and dedication. We believe that we in The Brethren Church must be challenged by this appeal and be committed to doing our part.

We received encouraging reports of the growth of the evangelical movement around the world. It was especially noted that progress has been the greatest in the Third World, where evangelical churches have multiplied at an unbelievable rate.

It is estimated that in Communist China the church may have as many as 50 million believers. In Latin America, Guatemala shows the greatest percentage of growth. It is possible that very soon half the population of that Central American country will be evangelical Christians. Again, as Brethren, we should be proud of the work we are doing in foreign fields, while at the same time realizing how much remains to be done.

An important emphasis at the Congress was the need for the "old guard" in the churches to pass on the torch to younger leaders. Young leaders, in turn, were challenged to accept the torch from the great men in every denomination and to go forth spreading the gospel.

One example of this, commented on in different ways, was Dr. Billy Graham, who was unable to attend the Congress because of his intense involvement in evangelistic crusades in England and other parts of Europe. He did not have sufficient energy left to attend the Congress, thus demonstrating the need for young people with greater energy to pick up the torch.

*Dr. Miranda supervises Brethren Hispanic mission work in California and Mexico.*

Some of us in The Brethren Church, even though we may not feel old, certainly need to work and pray so that God will call young men and women to pick up the torch in our local Brethren churches. We all must begin to prepare younger missionaries who will in a few years pick up the torch of mission leadership in The Brethren Church.

The year A.D. 2000 has become a target date for Christians around the world. The goal is to plan and work so that by that date the unreached people of the world will have had the opportunity to hear the gospel and that every people group will have a church in its own language. There are still 1,200 such unreached people groups left.

The Lausanne movement was born in 1974, when approximately half of the leaders who attended this year's congress met in Lausanne, Switzerland, to reflect upon the work of world evangelization. Since then many projects, organizations, and churches have been influenced



*Juan Carlos and María Miranda at the Congress location in Manila.*

by the "Lausanne spirit."

Now, fifteen years later, in the closing message of the Manila conference, Dr. Leighton Ford, president of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, emphasized the need to continue working, inspired by the Lausanne Covenant, to accomplish the great evangelization task until the year A.D. 2000 and beyond, until Christ comes.

The Congress on World Evangelization in Manila was a great inspiration. We would recommend that you read about the Congress and listen to tapes of the messages. We would be glad to provide you with a list of materials. Write to us or to THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST. We Brethren need to catch a vision of the responsibility we share to "Proclaim Christ Until He Comes." [†]

## LAUSANNE II in Manila: Personal Reflections

By María Miranda

**E**VEN THOUGH I was exhausted from the long and tiring trip to the Congress, the opening night of the gathering revived my spirit and left me with a desire to come back each day to participate in every session and workshop offered.

"The King's Kids," made up of children from many different countries, impressed me with their songs and gymnastic movements. And I was inspired when the Congress torch, which had been carried thousands of miles through 50 nations during the past 15 months, made its entrance into the auditorium, as hundreds of young people in the aisles lifted their lights high.

Yes, this was a spectacular show.

*In addition to assisting her husband in his work with Hispanics in California and Mexico, Mrs. Miranda has a Christian radio program that is heard by millions of women in Central and South America.*

Yet deep in my heart my prayer was, "Lord, I have not come only to be entertained, to listen to messages and outstanding testimonies, which time, that has no mercy, will erase from my memory. I have come to be renewed in my vision for a lost world, that you will open my mind to discover new ways to evangelize or to continue using what you have given me, that I, as a woman, may serve you within your body, the church."

I believe my prayer was answered immediately, for as I went through the workbook we had been given, I noticed many notations about the place of women in the great task of evangelization.

With much pleasure I observed that women in leadership positions from various countries spoke in plenary sessions. Dr. Roberta Hestenes and Mrs. Vonette Bright, both from the U.S.A.; Dr. Claydon from Australia; and Eva E. Borrows, General of the Salvation Army, presented messages full of

wisdom and power. The same was true of leaders of various workshops.

I have attended various conferences and congresses in the U.S.A. and abroad. But I believe this is the first one in which ministry by women was taken seriously — not in terms of who will present the word, but in terms of hearing the voice of God. But if the Spirit gives gifts as He pleases (I Cor. 12:11), who are we to judge the ministry of women within Christ's body?

Those who planned the Congress wanted to consider women in leadership. Their goal was that one out of every four participants should be a woman. The last figures presented indicated that 20 percent were women.

Personally, I believe that this Congress renewed my desire and my call to serve the Lord — to be a part of that multitude of Christians from every race and color willing to evangelize the whole world before A.D. 2000. [†]



# A Thriving Church In Difficult Times

By Ken Anderson

**M**EDIA COVERAGE of Beijing's Tiananmen Square, prior to the tragic bloodshed, missed a poignant scene: Christian students, circling the area, carrying a large banner on which they had lettered in Chinese characters, **GOD IS LOVE**. As they marched, they sang:

*All praise to Thee, our Savior,  
King,*

*As, marching through Thy gates,  
The incense of our prayers we  
bring*

*For men and magistrates!*

TV cameras also missed the touching drama as scores of non-Christian students followed the group, holding high their audio cassettes to record the singing.

An eye-witness to the Beijing spectacle, a Christian employed by one of the foreign embassies, told me that he estimated the evangelical presence at Tiananmen Square to be less than one percent. I wondered why, since youth conversions are currently soaring in China.

I was in the southern city of Guangzhou, formerly Canton, to finalize interviews for a biography I'm writing about China's best-known house church leader.

He is Pastor Samuel Lamb, a man who spent 20 years in prison for the counter-revolutionary misdemeanor of preaching the gospel.\* Now, with a house church of well over a thousand members, he is one of China's most provocative citizens, his name spoken in the highest government offices.

\*See "The 'Nameless' Church of Guangzhou, China," on pages 4-5 of the February 1989 issue of the *EVANGELIST*.

*Mr. Anderson is the founder and president of Ken Anderson Films, which produces Christian films.*



*Warm, animated, and resourceful, Pastor Lamb holds audiences in rapt attention. Here he meets with high school and college students.*

"We had demonstrations here in Guangzhou," he told me, "and students in our congregation asked my advice as to whether or not they should march."

Half of the pastor's congregation is made up of young people!

"What did you tell them?" I asked.

"I reminded them that the Bible clearly tells us we are to honor those in authority over us, and I gave them the example of Daniel in Babylon. He obeyed the king, became one of the nation's valued subjects. But when the king commanded Daniel to bow down before a heathen image, Daniel refused, just as Christians during the so-called Cultural revolution refused to venerate pictures of Mao Zedong."

"Did you have occasions when you refused to bow down?" I asked.

"Of course. But, also, when I was in prison, I had to attend indoctrina-

tion sessions for several hours each day. A young Catholic priest was in our group, and he had a very difficult time.

"Late one night, we were commanded to stand and renounce Christianity. Even if it meant death, which it surely might have, I could no more obey my government in this case than could Daniel.

"The young priest was terrified. I tried to help him, but he was too frightened to listen. My heart ached for him, as he denounced the Pope and made insulting statements about Mary and the Virgin Birth.

"Then my turn came. In the silence of my heart, I cried out to God for wisdom and guidance. I remembered the words of Jesus in Luke's Gospel, *When you are brought before . . . rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for*

*the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say. Wonderfully, the Lord made that promise real in my life."*

"How?" I asked.

With a touch of mirth in his eyes, Pastor Lamb replied, "I stood and denounced liberalism. I spoke of how those who claimed to be Christians denied the Scriptures and the very diety of the Lord Jesus. My oppressors were very satisfied with my performance!"

### Wise performance

The wise "performance" of Christians all over China has the Communist hierarchy both pleased and baffled. Invariably, Christian factory workers work harder and produce better products than non-Christians. The athiestic Cadre in charge of one farming commune said, "The more I persecute them, the more of them there are, and the more I leave them alone, the better they work."

The semi-official grapevine has it that the Bureau of Religious Affairs in Beijing is giving serious consideration to making house churches legal.

Actually, in giving token approval to Christianity through the Three-Self Church agency, officials had in mind the Communist belief that Christianity is so decadent that it will become extinct on its own within a couple of generations.

Leslie Lyall of Overseas Missionary Fellowship writes that, in a

recent three-year period, the conversion rate across China rose to more than twenty thousand souls per day! More than two thousand house churches are known to exist in China's twenty-two provinces.

Many Communist officials, in daily observance of Christians, have become like Saul of Tarsus. Five spies, assigned to report on the activities of one group, stood to their feet at the close of a meeting and asked to be shown how they, too, might seek the Lord.

When Christians in another community gathered to pray for a sick member of their congregation, the Communist's "neighborhood watch" notified police. A sergeant came to break up the group, lingered to listen, and was himself converted!

### Public witness forbidden

Overt public witness is forbidden in China. Hold a street meeting and go straight to jail. Therefore, it is the quiet lifestyle of believers that causes literally thousands to turn to the Savior.

A factory worker in Samuel Lamb's congregation suffered much persecution at his job when it became known that he was a Christian. He offered no protest, worked all the harder, and, when he could, helped others. In a year's time, a fourth of the work force had been converted, many of whom regularly attend Guangzhou worship services.

"I seldom lead a soul to Christ,"

Pastor Lamb says. "It is members of my congregation who introduce sinners to the Lord Jesus!"

### Overt persecution

A specialist in acupuncture from North China told me of the overt persecution Christians face in his area. Resistance to Christianity is much more severe in the north, and Christians must often worship in secret. Some resort to caves, more than two thousand before dawn each Sunday in one area. When anonymity requires, house church adherents assemble by ones and twos, avoiding any indication of a crowd. One group has met late at night in an old cemetery.

Yet the rate of conversion continues to escalate. In one county of seven hundred thousand, Christians number just under half.

"Many Communists are coming to the Lord these days," Pastor Lamb says.

But the road ahead may be rough. With Christianity still thought of as a foreign religion, rising indignation against China could instigate internal backlash.

It was in such a climate, however, that the church grew from a million souls in 1949 to as many as fifty million today. Like the Apostle Paul, Christians in China say, *I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation*. That's why China's church is thriving, even in these difficult times! [†]

### Baptized to Death!

(continued from page 5)

[baptism and church membership] and end up tacking them to a cross" (adapted from p. 115). Do the candidates know the cost and are they willing to pay it? Will they be bold in following the narrow way? Will they accept the disciplines of the community of faith into which they have been grafted? In other words, are people being serious about the Lordship of Jesus Christ when they are coming for baptism? Many of our problems about the back-door syndrome (people leaving active membership) begin in the baptistry!

All of this is set in a general cultural context of a crisis of commit-

ment, discussed so profoundly by Robert Bellah in his work, *Habits of the Heart*. In these days of individualism in our culture, people can name their own lord. It's a matter of taste and personal preference. (See Bellah, pages 219-249.)

Noel Paul Stookey shows a lot of insight when he tells about the trends in magazine titles as they reveal the direction of our culture. First we had *Life* — how big and broad can you get? Then, a few years ago a magazine was published called *People*. People are a large part of life, but not all of it. Then later, along came *Us*. "Us" are people too, but now we are forgetting about "them." More recently still a magazine appeared

with the title *Self*. Stookey says he is waiting any day now for an offer for a magazine called *Me!* You open it up and the pages are all Reynolds-Wrap! (From the 25th Anniversary Concert of Peter, Paul and Mary, 1986).

To us all, Jesus is asking once again, with sadness in His voice yet with the voice of authority, as He looks at so many of our lives and our congregations: "Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not do what I say?" It goes back to what the old Brethren knew so well: obedience. Let us, like our own immediate Brethren forefathers, "press on to know Jesus Christ as Lord, and then practice what we know." [†]



# A Call to Boycott Sponsors of TV's Smut and Violence

**D**O YOU get upset about the amount of violence and profanity on television? Does it concern you that the number of gruesome killings and the amount of suggestive sex on television seems to be continually on the increase?

If so, here is your opportunity to do something specific about it. You can boycott the products of two of the leading sponsors of programs containing such material.

Christian Leaders for Responsible Television (CLear-TV) is calling on concerned Americans to boycott for one year the products of The Mennen Company and Clorox Corporation, which it has determined are two of the leading sponsors of programs containing sex, violence, and profanity.

*The Social Responsibilities Commission of The Brethren Church has endorsed this boycott and is urging Brethren congregations and individuals to participate in it.*

Christian Leaders for Responsible Television is a coalition of approximately 1,600 Christian leaders. Chairman of the coalition is Dr. Billy A. Melvin, executive director of the National Association of Evangelicals.

The coalition called for the one-year boycott of Mennen and Clorox because the two companies were among the leading sponsors of objectionable programming during the "sweeps" period of April 27-May 24.

Prior to this sweeps period, letters were sent to all companies advertising on network television — including Mennen and Clorox — telling them of plans to monitor network programming during the period. The companies were told of CLear-TV's intention to call for a one-year boycott of one or more of the leading

sponsors of sex, violence, profanity, and anti-Christian stereotyping.

Both companies — Mennen and Clorox — acknowledged that they had received the correspondence. Yet results from monitoring during the sweeps period, done by approximately 3,000 monitors in 33 states, showed that Mennen and Clorox had ignored CLear-TV's request.

Programs which both Mennen and Clorox helped sponsor during the period included the following:

*Dream Street*, April 28, NBC. This episode dealt heavily with teen sex and included violence, profanity, and subtle references to sadomasochism.

*Miami Vice*, May 5, NBC. The show was filled with spattered blood and mutilated bodies. A main player in the story was the leader of a "radical right" group that referred to itself as "warriors for God" and persecuted Jews. There were also incidents of sex and profanity.

*Miami Vice*, May 21, NBC. This

two-hour final episode of the series was extremely violent, with man after man being blown away with hand guns and machine guns. The 30-second promo (just prior to the movie) included nine different scenes of guns being fired at people and a car explosion. Incidents of sex and profanity also occurred.

In addition to the above programs, Mennen helped to sponsor:

*The Equalizer*, April 27, CBS. The show included a torture scene, fifteen uses of profanity, and other violent scenes.

*A Man Called Hawk*, April 29, ABC. Profanity and violence, including a scene in which a man is shot and the camera focuses on his anguished facial contortions.

*Tour of Duty*, May 2 and May 16, CBS. Explosions with lots of bodies were the norm. Sex and profanity.

In addition to the programs that Clorox and Mennen together helped sponsor, Clorox also helped sponsor the following:

*Midnight Caller*, May 2, NBC. Sex, violence, profanity, with close-ups of shooting victims.

*Gideon Oliver*, May 22, CBS. The episode was entitled "Kennonite" (note similarity to Mennonite), and the plot focused on the murders of a husband and wife brutally bludgeoned to death with a hammer. The murderer turned out to be a supposedly righteous young woman (shown in an early scene fervently praying), who killed the couple to gain control of their land.

(continued on next page)

## Clorox and Mennen Products

### CLOROX PRODUCTS

#### Household products

Act laundry detergent  
Clorox bleach  
Clorox 2  
Formula 409 cleaner  
Fresh Scent liquid bleach  
Liquid-Plumr drain opener  
Lucite paints  
Soft Scrub cleanser  
Strike household cleanser  
Tackle cleaner  
Tilex cleaner  
Twice as Fresh deodorizer  
Wave dry bleach  
Wave powder detergent

#### Cat litter

Fresh Step cat litter  
Litter Green cat litter

#### Food products

Hidden Valley Ranch dressing  
Kitchen Bouquet cooking sauces  
Charcoal  
Kingsford charcoal  
Matchlight charcoal

### MENNEN PRODUCTS

#### Deodorants

Speed-Stick deodorant  
Lady Speed Dry deodorant

#### Toiletries

Afta after shave lotion  
Hawk cologne  
Mennen after shave  
Millionaire cologne  
Skin Bracer toiletries

#### Personal care products

Baby Magic shampoo  
Protein 29 hair products  
Smooth Legs shaving lotion

# Readers' Forum

A column in which readers can share their thoughts and views with the Brethren.

## Church Attendance: Serious Business!

I am concerned about how lightly some Christians take church attendance and membership. This is not a new problem by any means, and I am not attempting to say that I'm the first to notice or discuss it. But it has been on my heart lately, and I want to share this with you.

We are in a struggling church — a small church where you really notice when someone is absent. It breaks my heart to see how people can just fade out and stop coming. And the reasons they give! I've heard: "Well, it just isn't spiritual enough." "We never seem to accomplish anything." "I've had a disagreement with so and so — we just can't seem to get along."

I wonder how any church that hears the gospel preached isn't spiritual enough! Is the fault with the pastor or with the parishioner? And as for never accomplishing anything — how can we expect to if everyone keeps giving up? And getting along with each other takes two — there must be give and take. Christians must learn how to accept and love each other — warts and all!

When we become members of our local church, we repeat vows much like marriage vows. We promise to support the church with our time, talents, and finances. In our society today we see so much divorce. It seems too easy to just walk away from a marriage if it is not to our liking. What a terrible witness that Christians can also just walk away from their church if it is not to their liking. How soft we

have become! Aren't we willing to work at it — to sacrifice time and energy to help build a struggling church. Or are we too content to drift over to that established church with the great choir, the dynamic preacher, the full Sunday school classes, the vital youth group, something for everyone? Are we becoming consum-

ers in church too?

I'm convinced that God is disappointed with us. I think we need to get on our knees and pray for strength to do His will, not ours. I think we need to get tough and go at this like the serious business it is.

*A concerned Christian  
(Name withheld at writer's request.)*

### TV Boycott

*(continued from previous page)*

Past experience has shown that boycotts of sponsors' products are the best way to influence what is aired on television. Letters to the TV networks have little or no effect. Refusing to watch certain programs also has not proved to be effective. But boycotting the products of sponsors does get results.

The truth of this was shown during the sweeps period. Three TV programs scheduled to air during the period when CLeAr-TV monitored were cancelled by the networks because not enough companies were willing to sponsor them. Those shows were "Crimes of Passion II" and "Scandals II" on ABC, and "The Prize Pulitzer" on NBC, all of which were reported to contain high amounts of sex, violence, and profanity. This was the first time in the history of network television that shows scheduled to air were canceled because companies could not

be found to sponsor them.

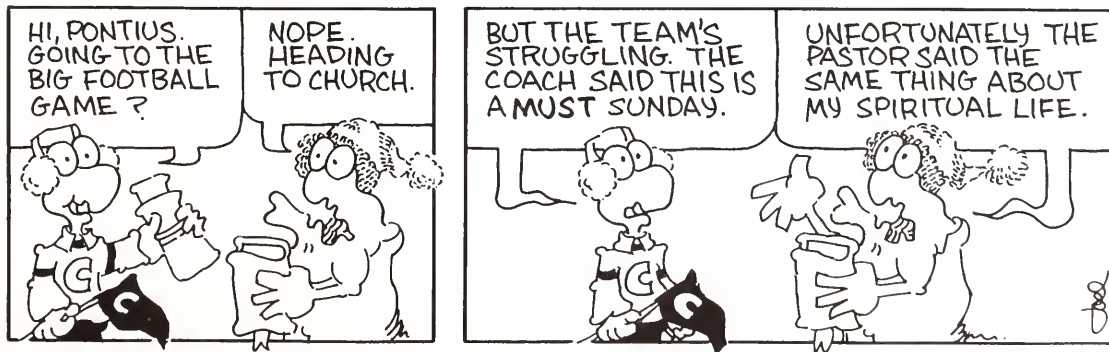
Therefore this boycott provides an excellent opportunity for concerned Christians to hold back the flood of sex, violence, profanity, and anti-Christian bias on television. If sales of Mennen and Clorox drop during this boycott (first announced on July 19 and scheduled to continue through July 1990), then these companies and every other advertiser on television will get the message that the American public demands an end to the exploitation of sex, violence, profanity, and anti-Christian stereotyping by the television networks.

Of course, if the boycott fails, then the network heads and advertising executives will know that they can continue, and even increase television violence and vulgarity.

Therefore, it is important for Brethren people who share a concern about the declining quality of television programming to join the thousands of other Americans who are participating in this boycott. [†]



### Pontius' Puddle







# New Beginnings

By Dr. Joseph R. Shultz

**T**HE exciting and challenging aspect of education, Easter, grace, the calendar, and gardening is that each year provides an opportunity for a new beginning. The old is not forgotten or thrown away, but becomes a foundation stone for new teaching, new students, new faculty; a new spirit of faith and hope; the forgiveness of old sins and mistakes; the opportunity for starting afresh; and a new season of vegetables, fruit, and flowers.

The principle of renewal is built into the universe — with its seasons, its generations, and its renewal of life through the Holy Spirit. In fact, new beginnings and the renewal of life are inevitable in God's created world. Persons, churches, and educational institutions not in the continuum of renewal are out of touch with God.

Ashland College has become Ashland University; the old dark, damp, dirty, broken basement of Memorial Chapel has been transformed into a splendid religious life and worship center; and the new director of religious life at Ashland University is Dr. Michael Gleason. All of this, and more, is the basis for new beginnings of religious life at Ashland.

Ashland, in the truest sense of the principles of Christianity, has reached out to serve its constituents. It serves the working man and woman who want a degree by offering classes at night and on Saturdays in order that they might gain the bachelor of sci-



*Dr. Joseph Shultz, President of Ashland University, chats with two AU students in the rose garden that was added to campus landscaping this summer.*

ence in business administration degree. It serves the young business executive who wants to advance his or her career by offering the master of business administration degree. It serves public school teachers who desire to continue and advance in their professions by offering the master of education de-

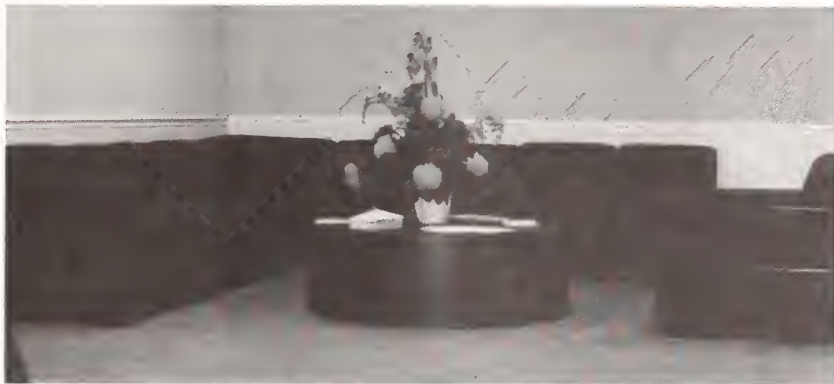
gree. It serves approximately 7,000 additional students in 150 school districts through programs of continuing education, that those persons in the work force might do a better job and gain personal fulfillment.

The seminary has reached out to many Christians across Ohio and

around the nation with a conservative, accredited, theological degree. Faculty members drive to Cleveland each week so that persons who are already preaching in churches — or young people who aspire to preach — might have the opportunity of learning the Bible, pastoral ministry, church history, and theology. Our dedicated faculty members also drive to Detroit each week to serve aspiring persons in Christian ministerial training. These programs have been particularly successful in training black persons for ministry.

Ashland College has changed to Ashland University because it is willing and anxious to serve all

*At right, a section of the large meeting room, and, below, one of several lounge areas in the newly remodeled basement of Memorial Chapel.*



constituencies in the 20th and 21st centuries. (I would hope and pray that we could be an example to the church.)

Ashland, being a Christian university of higher education, needs to present Christ and the Christian faith in the most positive way. If Christ and the Christian faith are the most important things in life, then they should have the most beautiful and effective physical setting on campus.

Through the generosity of Dr. Eunice Dean and the efforts of Dr. James Lifer, this has become a reality. Dr. Dean gave \$50,000 through her will for the Christian Life Center at Ashland. Dr. James Lifer, executor of the will, made sure that this money was used and appropriated in the best possible way. He also personally gave to this renewal project.

Mr. and Mrs. James Simmermon of Pittsburgh, Pa., were also anxious that our chapel be of the highest quality for the presentation of the gospel to the students at Ashland. In addition, Dr. John Wang of Taipei, Taiwan, contributed to the beauty of Christian worship at Ashland. All of this, and more, has created new beginnings in the old Memorial Chapel.

And most importantly, Dr. Mike Gleason has accepted the position of Director of Religious Life on the Ashland University campus. Mike came to Ashland as a student from Pittsford, New York, in 1971, graduating with a bachelor of arts degree in 1975. He was converted to the Christian faith and called to the Christian ministry while a student at Ashland. He then proceeded to Ashland Theological Seminary, where he received a

master of divinity degree and a doctor of ministry degree in church renewal.

Rev. Gleason served as director of Christian education at Winding Waters Brethren Church, then as pastor of Pleasant View Brethren Church in Vandergrift, Pa., and most recently as pastor of evangelism and discipleship at Park Street Brethren Church. His commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ and his rich experiences in the ministry of The Brethren Church make him highly qualified to lead the students at Ashland into the faith, into the walk of the Christian life, and whenever appropriate, into Christian ministry.

There will be renewed effort in Christian worship on campus, in Bible studies, in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, in special events, in retreats, and in many other ways to show forth the gospel of our Lord. There will also be a renewed effort in talking to young men and women about their lives and about Christian ministry.

The new beginnings of the spreading of the gospel and religious life on the Ashland University campus are made possible by your support — prayer, sons and daughters, and financial resources. Thank you for all that has happened in the past and for the faith for the future. [†]





# Campus Ministry: Roots and Wings

By Dr. Michael Gleason

**T**HE century-old 1884-1885 "Ashland College and Normal and Business Institute" catalogue states articulately that Ashland College is "... an institution for the promotion of higher education under Christian influences that would develop its students intellectually but not at the expense of the heart ...."

That's the way it was 100 years ago. The university boasted six faculty members; Ashland was a town of about 4,000. The cost of living was in keeping with the time: "Table board, with furnished room, per week . . . \$2.00." "Tuition: \$19.00 per term." Ahh . . . the good old days! True, some things have changed. But our basic educational and spiritual roots have stood the test of time.

The current Ashland University catalogue, for example, states that a goal of the university is "to provide its students with an academic environment that emphasizes scholarship, character and cultural attainments under influences that are based on sound Christian ideals and designed to make possible visible Christian experiences." More than a century of liberal arts education has not altered our basic goal! The words may be different, but the underlying message is the same.

With our roots firmly secured, students are free to spread their wings, supported by the strong foundation of our common heritage. And what of this present academic year? It looks to be a promising one for flying! Buckle

*Dr. Michael Gleason. Ashland University's new Director of Religious Life, in the new director's office in the newly remodeled Memorial Chapel basement.*



your seat belt, and allow me to take you on a tour around Ashland University to let you view first hand a "typical" week.

Last Tuesday ended on a great note. Joe Maggelet, one of our Coalition staff members (college graduates trained in campus ministry who work with the Department of Religious Life while also serving as dormitory resident directors), called to tell me that he had led two freshmen students to Christ! Joe will work side-by-side with me in developing a strong evangelistic and discipleship emphasis on campus.

Last Wednesday evening was our first formal HOPE Fellowship gathering in the new CENTER of Religious Life. More than 70 students attended. The format was upbeat and positive, providing a creative mix of music, fellowship, and biblical teaching. HOPE Fellowship will sponsor many ministries this year, thus providing numerous opportunities for student involvement. For example, those who de-

sire to develop and strengthen HOPE fellowship weekly meetings can do so through participation in the worship, family/fellowship, or publicity ministries. Those who wish to extend their service beyond the Wednesday meetings can do so by leading one of the 12 dormitory Bible studies, by going on a short-term mission trip, by participating in evangelism and discipleship training, or by joining one of the Gospel Teams.

Thursday was an exciting day around the CENTER. The enthusiasm generated by the first HOPE Fellowship meeting attracted many students back to the CENTER throughout the day for informal fellowship and sharing. Thursday evening found 20+ Brethren students, pastors, and Christian workers at Park Street Brethren Church for a "make your own sundae" fellowship cosponsored by the Department of Religious Life and the Park Street and Garber Brethren Churches. The goal of the evening was fellowship,

fun, information, and the development of a common identity among our Brethren students.

Friday provided the opportunity for a rewarding counseling session with two students who made a solid commitment to put Christ first in their lives. An Ashland Seminary student, who works through my office to provide leadership for the Ashland University Fellowship of Christian Athletes organization, met with me over the noon hour to share his vision for this group. His desire, which I share, is to see athletes brought to Christ and to discipleship through the arm of this

well-known national organization.

Saturday afternoon found seven international students meeting in the CENTER for Bible study. Two are not presently Christians, but are very open to the gospel.

Today, more student contacts. I talked with a bright young lady about her career choices, and spoke with another about related future concerns. Final details were assembled for the upcoming HOPE Fellowship, with Dr. Joseph Shultz as our guest speaker. Our goal is 100 students this week! More contacts, more lives, more opportunities to share Christ and shape Christian character. The future of Campus

Ministry at Ashland University is strong, bright, and positive!

Brethren friends, thank you for your most generous support of Campus Ministry over the years. Your gifts assist us in maintaining the focus so clearly defined in the roots of our tradition. That focus, again, being "the promotion of higher education under Christian influences that would develop its students intellectually but not at the expense of the heart . . ."

With our roots firmly secured, students are free to spread their wings, supported by the strong foundation of our common heritage! This is our goal! [†]



## Ashland University's New Look

By Mark Ray

**T**HERE'S A NEW LOOK on the Ashland University campus. It's exciting to see the changes — new signs, additional landscaping, some dormitory remodeling, the new food court, and a beautifully remodeled CENTER of Religious Life. There are other changes as well, such as the new "no alcohol" policy, a new eagerness in the Religious Life Office, and a willingness of some students to serve in various ministry opportunities.

It's been said that "College is only the beginning." If this is true, then it is necessary to start off on the right foot. These changes at Ashland University will make the institution all the more appealing to prospective students and their parents. It is in college where many lifetime decisions are made, and these decisions can be influenced by other students, by faculty, and by the university itself.

What excites me this year are the broadened opportunities for students to fellowship with one another and to give service to the Lord. HOPE Fellowship, the in-

terdenominational Christian faith group, provides a wonderful praise service each week. But HOPE is also expanding its horizons this year to greater service.

Groups such as campus evangelism, worship committees, short-term missions, and retreat planning are continuing. In addition this year we are seeing the resurrection of the Gospel Teams of past years. These teams will be a vital ministry of the university. They will provide students another chance to serve God, to be served, and to serve others.

Christian friends are another important part of the college experience. At times it is easy to become discouraged or stressed. At such times, an encouraging word from a Christian friend can help. HOPE Fellowship is a tool through which these friendships can develop.

As a member of The Brethren Church, I am excited by the influx of dedicated Brethren students this year. Some are pursuing education degrees, some are undecided, and some are preparing for the seminary. The Brethren Student Fellowship is in the process of being

*Mark Ray,  
a sophomore  
at Ashland  
University, is  
serving his  
second year as  
moderator of  
National BYC.*



organized through the seminary. It is awesome to be a part of those who desire to serve the Lord and The Brethren Church.

All of these aspects, plus classes, professors, and dorm life, make for a total educational experience at Ashland University. Without any one of these, the education would be incomplete.

One of Ashland's missions is to encourage students to grow spiritually. Through HOPE, Christian students, and faculty and staff members who are committed to the Lord, this mission can be accomplished.

Ashland University is making a statement in the community and the state by the steps which it has taken this year. "Accent on the individual" will continue as long as people are committed to meeting student needs in this way. [†]



### Rev. Daniel Gray Becomes Pastor Of Sarasota First Brethren Church

Sarasota, Fla. — Rev. Daniel Gray assumed the pastorate of the Sarasota First Brethren Church on Saturday, July 1, 1989, and was officially introduced to the congregation the following day.

Associate pastor Rev. Kenneth Solomon gave the charge to the new pastor during the morning worship hour on July 2. Vice-Moderator Eugene Robbins then formally introduced Rev. Gray, his wife Paula, and their sons Nathan (12), Brandon (10), and Colin (5) to the Sarasota congregation.

Following the service, the Grays were guests of honor at an all-church carry-in dinner, planned by the social committee of the congregation. During the fellowship time after the meal, the JOY Sunday school class officially welcomed the Grays by presenting them a "Florida Survival Kit."

The kit contained white sand from Florida's beaches to replace the white winters of the North; a "love bug" screen to take the place of snow tires; and "jams" (shorts) and tank tops as substitutes for sweaters and wool socks. Also in the kit were such essentials as a Sarasota map, a windshield sun screen, and a can of Raid for the dreaded cockroach (or Palmetto bug,

as Floridians prefer to call it).

The boys were also shown the proper way to put a lizard to sleep. And the family was asked to make what may be the most difficult sacrifice of all, to trade their Chicago Bears football T-shirts for Tampa Bay Bucs shirts.

Rev. Gray came to the Sarasota congregation from the First Brethren Church of Elkhart, Ind., which he pastored for 10 years. Sarasota corres-

pondent Billie Barth writes, "In just the few short weeks that [Rev. Gray] has been here, he has won our hearts with his contagious smile and his inspirational messages from the pulpit. The personality of his family has shown us the love of Jesus and their willingness to serve the Lord.

"God blessed us with the leadership of Dr. J.D. Hamel for 28 years and is continuing to bless us with Rev. Dan Gray and his family. . . . We are truly looking forward to 'great and mighty things' that await us here at Sarasota First Brethren as Rev. Gray endeavors to lead us in the will of the Lord."



Mary Ellen Swope shows Pastor Dan Gray the map of Sarasota from the "Florida Survival Kit," while Mrs. Gray (Paula) looks on.

Photo by Cheryle R. Bixler.

### Linwood Brethren Honor Pastor and Wife For 35 Years in the Christian Ministry

Linwood, Md. — Rev. Robert Keplinger and his wife, Dolores, were honored by the Linwood Brethren Church at a surprise picnic supper June 30 in recognition of the Keplingers' 35 years in Christian ministry.

More than 80 members and friends of the Linwood Church, which Rev. Keplinger pastors, attended the picnic, which was held at the Lions Club Park in New Windsor. Among those present were the Keplingers' son Tom, daughter-in-law Carol, and Bob and Dee's first grandchild, Robert, who were visiting from Ashland.

A time of fellowship and reminiscing followed the meal. Sharing memories of the Keplingers were son Tom, longtime friends Rev. and Mrs. Doc Shank (who helped plan the picnic), and Rev. Ed. Schwartz, another longtime friend. A letter of congratu-

lations and reminiscences from Rev. and Mrs. Don Rowser was also read.

The children's chorus of the Linwood Church, under the direction of Dave Keefer and Deb Lowman, sang three numbers. Jim Myers, on behalf of the members and friends of the church, presented the Keplingers with an engraved pewter bowl. And all present enjoyed a decorated cake baked by Reva Blacksten, another by Denise Whitney, and various other goodies.

A graduate of both Ashland College (B.A., 1951) and Ashland Theological Seminary (B.D., 1954; M. Div., 1977), Rev. Keplinger was ordained in June 1954. During his 35 years of ministry he pastored the Canton, Ohio, Trinity Brethren Church; the Levittown-Fairless Hills, Pa., Brethren Church; the Washington, D.C., Brethren Church; and the Linwood Brethren Church. He



Rev. Bob and Dee Keplinger with one of the cakes baked for the occasion.

also served for several years as part-time pastor of Faith Chapel in Hurllock, Md.

In addition to son Tom, mentioned above, the Keplingers have a second son, Charles (Chip), who also lives in Ashland.

— reported by Virginia M. Hook

# Brethren Youth Are Challenged To "Shine On!" at BYC Convention

**North Manchester, Ind.** — Brethren Youth Crusaders were challenged to "Shine On!" for Jesus during the National BYC Convention, held August 7-11 on the Manchester College campus in conjunction with the General Conference of The Brethren Church.

"Shine On! You are the Light of the World!" was both the theme of the Convention and the challenge from BYC Moderator Mark Ray in his address to the youth. In addition to delivering this address, Mark conducted the Convention business sessions during the week and was reelected to serve another year as BYC moderator. Mark is from Milford, Ind., where he is a member of the Milford First Brethren Church, and he is a sophomore at Ashland University.

Approximately 125 youth attended the BYC Convention. In addition to conducting their Convention business, they worshiped together, studied God's word, attended workshops, had times of fellowship, and held their annual Youth Communion Service.

They also had their ingathering for their annual project, which this year was to raise money to help with the cost of an addition to the Town and Country Community Church building in Tampa, Fla. A total of \$5,007.02 was received in the ingathering. This included money that was raised in the "Penny Drive," a contest to see which BYC group could save the most pennies during the past year.

The winner of the Penny Drive was the Bethlehem BYC from Harrisonburg, Va., which raised \$236.50 in pennies. Runner-up was the BYC of the Ashland, Ohio, Garber Brethren Church, which collected an even \$200 worth of pennies.

The annual Moderator's Cup award was presented during the Wednesday evening Coffeehouse, which featured a sharing of gifts and talents by the youth. This year's Moderator's Cup winner was the Roanoke, Ind., BYC. The BYC from the Tucson, Ariz., First Brethren Church was the runner-up. Third place went to the Highland BYC from Marianna, Pa. Receiving honorable mention were the BYC groups from Sarver, Pa.; Ashland Garber; Bethlehem; New Lebanon, Ohio; Sarasota, Fla.; Mulvane, Kans.; Burling-

ton, Ind.; and North Manchester, Ind.

In addition to the reelection of Moderator Mark Ray, the following officers were selected: Vice Moderator — Kurt Stout, a member of the Burlington, Ind., First Brethren Church and a sophomore at Taylor University; Treasurer — John Howenstine (reelected), a member of the Canton, Ohio, Trinity Brethren and a sophomore at Ashland University; Secretary — Kim Wagoner (reelected), a member of the Elkhart, Ind., First Brethren Church and a junior at Ashland University; Assistant Secretary — Michelle Geaslen, a member of the Burlington, Ind., First Brethren Church and a freshman at Ashland University; and Statistician — Paul Sluss, a member of the Roanoke, Ind., First Brethren Church and a freshman at Ashland University.

As their 1990 project, the Convention delegates voted to provide support for the Palo Solo Church in Mexico City, Mexico.

*The 1990 National BYC officers are (l. to r.) Treasurer John Howenstine; Secretary Kim Wagoner, Vice Moderator Kurt Stout, Moderator Mark Ray, Assistant Secretary Michelle Geaslen, and Statistician Paul Sluss.*



## Boy Scout from Lanark Church Receives God and Family Award

**Lanark, Ill.** — Aaron Hollewell of the Lanark First Brethren Church received the Boy Scout "God and Family" award on May 28 at the Lanark Church.

Aaron, 11, the son of Steve and Anita Hollewell, was presented the award by Lanark pastor Rev. Tom Schiefer during the morning worship service.

As part of Aaron's work to earn the award, he had written an original psalm. After receiving the award, he read his psalm (which follows) to the Lanark congregation.

### A Psalm of Praise

by Aaron C. Hollewell

*I praise the Lord with happiness be-*

*cause he believes in me. I praise Him with my voice and with my instruments.*

*For saving my soul I praise the Lord. For helping me with hard choices I praise Him. When I need someone to talk to I praise the Lord. For being there for me I praise Him.*

*At school I give Him thanks. At church I praise the Lord. At clubs I give Him honor.*

*When I am happy and when I am sad I praise the Lord. When I'm in trouble I praise the Lord. When people die I praise the Lord. When I get good grades and when I win pinewood derby I thank the Lord. When I get braces I praise the Lord. Always I praise the Lord.*

*The Lord is a person to praise!!!!!!*

Happiness adds and multiplies as we divide it with others. — A. Nielsen

## National Bible Week to be Observed November 19-26

**New York, N.Y.** — National Bible Week will be observed November 19-26.

National Bible Week, which is also Thanksgiving week, is a time to emphasize the importance of the Bible in the history of the United States and in contemporary life and culture and to encourage the reading of God's word.

A packet containing ideas for promoting and observing Bible Week that includes a blank for ordering quantities of materials for distribution in the community is available free from:

The Laymen's National Bible Association, Inc.  
Dept. S  
475 Riverside Drive, Suite 439  
New York, NY 10115-0122



## St. James Honors Pastor and Wife With 25th Anniversary Celebration

**St. James, Md.** — The St. James Brethren Church hosted a surprise 25th wedding anniversary celebration on Sunday, June 11, for senior pastor Rev. Brian Moore and his wife, Amanda.

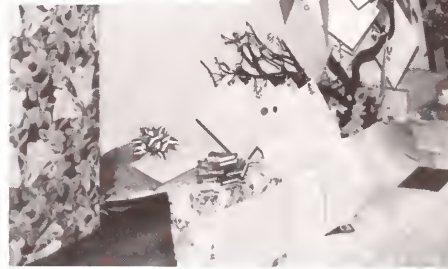
Associate pastor Rev. Tim Garner preached the sermon that morning. At the close of his message, he asked that the congregation be seated and that Rev. and Mrs. Moore come to the front of the sanctuary. After a second call, the honorees reluctantly came forward, not knowing what to expect.

At the front of the sanctuary, they were greeted by their mothers, who had arrived in time to pin a corsage and boutonniere on their children. Then the couple and their mothers were escorted by the congregation to the fellowship hall, where a luncheon was held. During the celebration, the couple received a money tree and other gifts.

Keeping the secret had been a high priority for this event. This required a high level of cooperation by the congregation, with many people taking responsibilities.

The adult Sunday school classes were responsible for food preparations.

*Pastor Brian and Amanda Moore with the money tree and other gifts they received from the St. James congregation.*



The invitations were done in the church office on Pastor Moore's days off. Individuals were appointed to order the cake, prepare decorations, and receive the RSVP's.

When the day arrived, a group of people worked diligently during the second worship service to prepare the fellowship hall for the luncheon. As out-of-town guests and relatives arrived, Eric Moore, oldest son of the honorees, greeted them and escorted them to the hall.

By working together, the congrega-



tion was able to pull off the surprise. Pastor Moore didn't get any hints of what was happening, or if he did, they didn't sink in. The surprise celebration was a success, making it a little more special for the congregation, as they worked together to honor their senior pastor and his wife.

Pastor Moore has served the St. James congregation since 1983. He and Amanda have three sons — Eric (20), and twins Alan and Bradley (12).

— reported by *Sandra L. Suller*, church secretary

## Robert Norris Becomes Pastor Of Raystown Brethren Church

**Saxton, Pa.** — Robert Norris became pastor of the Raystown Brethren Church on August 14, after serving the congregation for 3½ months as interim pastor.

Pastor Norris has been a licensed minister for seven years in the

Church of the Brethren. During that time he did substitute preaching in various congregations. This is his first pastorate.

Pastor Norris has worked for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for 9½ years and is currently a highway foreman. He is married, and he and his wife, Rosalyn, have two daughters, Rebecca (12) and Onieka (7).

— reported by *Susan Weimert*



*Raystown Pastor Robert Norris with his wife Rosalyn and their daughters, Rebecca (r.) and Onieka.*



**Goshen, Ind.** — John and Shirleen Hochstedler were commissioned as deacon and deaconess in the Jefferson Brethren Church on Sunday morning, May 21, 1989. Rev. Kerry L. Scott, pastor of the Jefferson congregation, was in charge of the commissioning service.

# Berlin Senior Citizen, Teenager Take Joy Ride in Small Airplane

**Berlin, Pa.** — "JOY Partners" M. Geneva Altfather and Corey Wills of the Berlin Brethren Church took an airplane "joy ride" August 9, with Corey, who had just turned 19 the day before, as pilot.

No, the "joy ride" was not a spur-of-the-moment escapade of a rash senior citizen and a rebellious teenager. Rather it was the fruition of events put in motion approximately seven years earlier, when Corey was still a member of the junior youth group of the Berlin Brethren Church.

At that time, Ellis Kimmel, advisor for the Jr. BYC, initiated the "JOY Partner" idea. Each young person was to choose a member of the Golden Age Sunday school class (mostly ladies) to be remembered at Christmas with a poinsettia, on Mother's Day with an orchid, birthday with candy, and any other holiday with an appropriate gift. Of course, the Golden Ager was to remember her partner with gifts as well.

Corey was paired with Geneva. They were to be partners for a year, but when the year was over, they were satisfied and didn't want to change partners. Same thing next year and the next. Finally, Corey completed high school and went on to college. And he also got his pilot's license.

When Corry received the license, a desire got into Geneva's head. She'd

like to ask for a ride, to have Corey show her Berlin from the air. Corey's dad, John, would go along, of course.

Finally, the urge got too much for Geneva, and she let her desire be known to fellow church member Tom Sprowls, Sr., on the day of the annual Sunday school picnic. Tom couldn't resist the idea; he talked to John to see what the possibility would be. "No

problem," was the answer, except there wouldn't be room for dad.

So on August 9, the two JOY Partners went for their joy ride. Geneva got a bird's-eye view of the Altfather homeplace, the borough of Berlin, the Berlin-Brothersvalley School where she faithfully taught for so many years, and the surrounding countryside.

According to Geneva, the day was perfect and the ride was super. "Everything was so green," she said. "God's earth was at its peak. . . . Praise God from Whom all blessings flow."



*Following the joy ride, Geneva is helped from the plane by Tom Sprowls and LaRue Engleka, Corey's aunt, as Corey watches from the pilot's seat.*

*Photo by eight-year-old Joshua Sprowls.*

## Let Brethren Chaplains Know Of Brethren in Armed Forces, Urges Chap. Kenneth Madison

**Ft. Knox, Ky.** — Brethren Army chaplain Captain Kenneth J. Madison urges Brethren churches to let him and other Brethren chaplains know when Brethren service men or women are stationed in their area.

Chaplain Madison recently had an opportunity to spend some time with Pvt. Grant Shoemaker, a member of the Northwest Brethren Chapel, who was stationed at Ft. Knox where Madison serves. But Madison learned that Shoemaker was at the base quite by accident.

While on vacation in July, Madison and his family attended the Milford, Ind., Brethren Church, where he met Mr. and Mrs. Jim Holsinger of Tucson, Ariz., also on vacation. When the Holsingers learned that Madison was stationed at Ft. Knox, they told him

that Grant, a member of their church, was in training there.

Upon returning to the base, Madison made some phone calls, found that Shoemaker was still there, and arranged to meet him on July 28. During that meeting they chatted for about a half hour, then Madison made arrangements for Grant to attend the chapel he serves on August 13, and he invited Grant to join him and his family for a home-cooked meal and some Brethren fellowship after the service.

Madison notes that Brethren chaplains want to have this kind of contact with Brethren service people, but that they often don't know that Brethren are stationed on their bases.

The Brethren Church

has three chaplains on active duty — Madison, at 5759A Allison Ave., Ft. Knox, KY 40121; Chap. Joseph Hanna (Air Force), 219 Baseview Dr., San Antonio, TX 78227; and Chap. Daniel DeVeney (Army), 90 Laurel Place, Huachuca City, AZ 85616.



*Brethren Chaplain Ken Madison (r.) chats with Pvt. Grant Shoemaker at Ft. Knox.*



# Gen. Conference Moderator Speaks to SE Dist. on Authentic Discipleship

Woodstock, Va. — General Conference Moderator Dr. Mary Ellen Drushal presented an inspirational address on the 1990 General Conference theme, "Be Authentic Disciples," at the fall conference of the Southeastern District, held Saturday, September 16, at the St. Luke Brethren Church.

Dr. Drushal led the 85 delegates and 26 registered guests at the conference in a consideration of three aspects of discipleship from the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7.

Though the fall conference has traditionally been devoted primarily to inspiration and fellowship, a business session was conducted by District Moderator Richard Craver. In addition to hearing reports from district boards and national ministries, delegates amended the district constitution to grant the executive committee the option of placing in "mission congregation" status churches that are unable to fulfill the requirements for being "in good standing" in the district. They also approved a recommendation

for payment of credential fees for both district conference meetings rather than only for the spring conference, as in the past.

A major announcement, presented by the district mission board, was that Charles Beekley, former Director of Christian Education for The Brethren Church, has accepted a call to become the church-planting pastor for Frederick, Md. Mr. Beekley and his fam-

ily will move to Frederick next summer (1990).

Following a sumptuous lunch served by the St. Luke women, the afternoon program included a musical presentation by the "Waterbrook Singers" and a pictorial report on the summer camping program by Darryl Shanholtz.

The fall men and women's rally is scheduled for the Bethlehem Brethren Church in Harrisonburg, Va., on Saturday, November 4. The spring conference will be held at the Oak Hill, W. Va., First Brethren Church on Saturday, April 28, 1990.

— reported by Rev. Ronald W. Waters

## William Kerner to Conduct Workshops in SE District

Woodstock, Va. — Rev. William Kerner will conduct a pair of deacon-deaconess workshops in the Southeastern District this fall.

Identical sessions will be held on Saturday, October 28, from 9 to 3 at St. Luke, and Sunday, October 29, from 2 to 8 at Hagerstown. The workshops are being jointly sponsored by the district Board of Christian Education and the Ministerial Association.

Rev. Kerner, former Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church and a former pastor, has conducted similar workshops for districts and local congregations. During the workshops, he will examine the biblical basis for deacons and deaconesses, their qualifications and duties, the relationship between pastors and deacons/deaconesses, and method and term of election.

Deacons and deaconesses, pastors and wives, and others interested in this training are encouraged to attend. Cost of the workshop is \$5. A meal will be provided by the host congregations on a donation basis. Registrations should be sent to the host pastors by October 22.

## Dr. Harold Barnett Featured In Hagerstown, Md., Newspaper

Hagerstown, Md. — Dr. Harold Barnett, pastor of the First Brethren Church of Hagerstown, was featured on the front page of Section B of the Sunday, June 18, edition of the Hagerstown *Herald-Mail* newspaper.

The lengthy article, which appeared under a 6¼ by 9½ inch color picture of Dr. Barnett, focuses on his involvement in political and moral issues. It takes particular note of his election two years ago to the Washington County Republican Central Committee, an election which stunned local political observers and which he won without spending any money or campaigning. It also mentions a highly publicized movement he led to push two adult bookstores out of Hagerstown's Public Square.

The article also presents Barnett's answer to those who criticize him for his involvement in political and social issues, and it gives considerable detail about his life from his birth in Lost Creek, Ky., to the present.

## ABORTION!

A subject that sparks controversy . . . and a subject not directly addressed by the Word of God.

The Social Concerns Committee of General Conference has published ***Abortion: A Study in the Word of God*** to help individuals and groups grapple with this issue, drawing from the whole message of Scripture to seek the will of God.

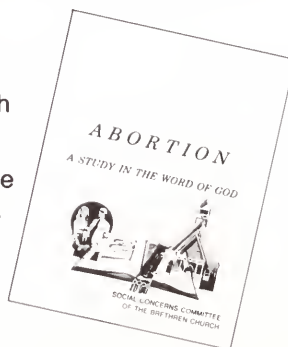
The study is suitable for Sunday school classes, Bible studies, and personal examination. It is divided into two units — A: "Scriptural Principles Related to the Issue," and B: "Scriptural Principles Related to Your Response."

*Order copies for your group today.*

Student Books — 1-9 copies: \$2.00 each  
10 or more copies: \$1.00 each

Teacher's Guide — \$2.50 each or one free with order of 10 or more student books.

**Brethren Publishing Company**  
524 College Ave.  
Ashland, OH 44805



# Little Crusader



Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

## CAN GOD'S HEART BE BROKEN?

Have you ever wondered if God can feel hurt as we do? We know that Jesus, God's Son, felt hurt, was sad, and cried. He had a human body and human feelings. But what about God the Father and God the Holy Spirit?

Read Genesis 6:1 through 9:17 in your Bible. The story of Noah and the flood is not so much a story about God being angry as it is a story about God feeling hurt. He was very disappointed and sad.

In the beginning God said that all that He had made was "good." But by Noah's time God saw that people had become very wicked. He knew that all people did was think about evil all the time. The Bible tells us that God was very sad, that His heart was filled with pain. (See Genesis 6:5.)

God loves us very much. He made all people for good, not for evil. How much it must have hurt God to see His creation full of violence and hatred! How sad He must have been to see people hurting one another! This was not at all what God had planned. So the flood was a way to start over. The rains came down like the tears of God falling on the earth, washing it clean and making it new again.

When it was all over, God promised Noah that even though people are evil, He would never again destroy all living things as He had just done. And He gave the rainbow as a sign of that promise. (See Genesis 8:21-22 and 9:8-17.)

God knows that we cannot be the perfect people that He intended. We all sin and disappoint God. But the good news is that God still loves us. He still reaches out to us. And we have rainbows to remind us of His great love.

## Why God Made Us

Cross out every other letter in the jumbled letters below. (The first ones are done for you.) Then write the remaining letters on the lines beneath them, to find out why God made us.

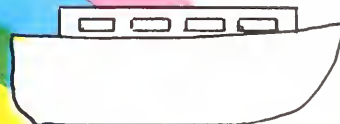
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ . . . (Ephesians 2:10a).

## Make Your Own Rainbow!

You can make a rainbow using crayons, markers, or watercolor paints. You can also make a colored rice rainbow. Here's how:

1. Put some white rice into a small plastic bag. Add a few drops of food color and shake well. Do other colors in separate bags.
2. Spread the dyed rice onto a paper towel to dry.
3. When the rice is dry, sprinkle it one color at a time onto an arched strip of white glue on cardboard.





# Indiana Business Conference Held September 16th at Warsaw Church

**Warsaw, Ind.** — Indiana Brethren heard messages by 1989 District Moderator Ken Hunn and 1990 Moderator Keith Bennett and cared for district business at the Fall Business Conference of the Indiana District, held September 16 at the Warsaw First Brethren Church.

Using Ephesians 4:1-16 and I Corinthians 13 as his texts, Moderator Hunn, pastor of the Warsaw congregation, challenged the churches of the district to measure themselves by the measure of Christ. He further called upon Indiana Brethren to report for duty and to "Pursue Love" (the conference theme).

In his message, Rev. Hunn included two recommendations: (1) that the conference aspire to be a leader among the districts in paying apportionments (district and national), in supporting the (district and national) programs of the brotherhood, and in planning, developing and implementing new ventures in every area of ministry; and (2)

that the offices of moderator-elect, moderator, and past moderator be officially designated the "moderator track," and that they be given specific leadership responsibilities in the district. Both recommendations were adopted by the conference and are to be implemented in the coming year.

The 138 delegates who attended the conference also: approved a motion to base the 1990 conference apportionment on Church Growth Index Points (rather than on membership); decided to hold both an inspirational and a business conference again in 1990; heard and accepted reports from officers and ministries of the district.

The conference treasurer reported that 70 percent of the district's potential apportionment was received in 1988, with 17 of the 39 churches paying their full apportionment.

According to the statistician's report, average worship attendance in the district's churches in 1988 was 3,576 and average Sunday school at-

tendance was 2,444; a total of 272 members were gained during the year and 332 were lost, for a net loss of 60 members; membership at the end of 1988 was 4,831. Indiana is the largest district in the denomination, with 31.5% of Brethren congregations; 33.2% of denominational membership; 34.2% of Sunday morning worshippers; and 35.5% of Sunday school students.

In elections, Rev. James Miller, pastor of the Carmel Brethren Church, was chosen moderator-elect; Rev. Mark Britton was elected treasurer; and Rev. Stephen Barber was chosen statistician.

The new moderator, Rev. P. Keith Bennett, pastor of the Muncie First Brethren Church, concluded the conference with a challenge message on the 1990 theme, "Pursue His Likeness" (I John 3:1-3.)

The 1990 inspirational conference will be held June 15-16 at the Brethren Retreat Center. The Fall Business Conference will be held on September 15, with the location to be announced later.

— written by the editor from the minutes of the district secretary, Rev. James Sluss.

## Reilly Smith Serves Mulvane As Both Pastor and Policeman

**Mulvane, Kans.** — Rev. Reilly Smith, pastor of the Mulvane Brethren Church, wears several hats.

In addition to his local pastoral duties and his district and denominational church responsibilities, Rev. Smith works as a Crime Prevention Officer for the Mulvane Police Department and also serves as chaplain for the department.

Rev. Smith and his various responsibilities were featured in an article that appeared on the "Folks Next Door" page of the July 26 edition of *The Old Settler*, a Mulvane Newspaper. The article also gave some biographical information about Smith and provided him an opportunity to witness to the importance of Jesus Christ in his life.

Smith became pastor of the Mulvane Brethren Church in July 1985. About eight months later, he joined the local police department as a reserve officer. Before entering the pastoral ministry, he had served in law enforcement as a State Park Ranger in Ohio. In fact, it was while working as a ranger that he made a serious commitment of his life to the Lord Jesus Christ. About a year later (c.

1958), the Lord called him into the ministry.

Smith was quoted in the article as saying that his roles as pastor and policeman complement one another. Being a police officer has helped him get to know the people of Mulvane a lot faster, and he also gets more oppor-

tunities to share his faith with people personally while in the uniform than he does as a pastor.

In addition to his roles as pastor and policeman, Smith is also a husband and father. He and his wife, Cindy, have three children — Jofaya (16), Kara (14), and Sean (13).



**Muncie, Ind.** — Children of the Muncie First Brethren Church went "Around the World With Jesus" during their July 17-21 vacation Bible school. Each day a wonderful time machine with many flashing lights (above r.) would whisk them to an appropriately decorated room in China, Canada, Colombia, India, or Nigeria (above l.), where a teacher in national dress would teach them how people in these countries live and how missionaries teach them the word of God.

Reported by Wilma Blizell; photos by Penny Garrett.

## From The



## Grape Vine

**Albert Derrer**, a member of the Lanark First Brethren Church, celebrated his 102nd birthday on June 2. He still lives in his own home and only occasionally needs help from his family.

**Alberta and Keith Wilkinson** were recognized as Christian Educators of the Year on August 6 by the Milledgeville Brethren Church.

### In Memory

**Ruth Pauline Mundorf**, 84, September 22. Faithful member for many years of the Park Street Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Arden E. Gilmer.

**Lucetta Hibbs**, 81, September 18. Lifetime member of the Pittsburgh First Brethren Church. She served for many years as camp nurse in the Pennsylvania District. Services by Pastor Randy Best.

**Joe H. Lewis**, 73, September 18. Member for 61 years of the Tiosa Brethren Church. Services by Pastor George Brown.

**Lemuel F. Cleaver**, September 12. Longtime member of the Mathias Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Jerry Fike.

**Mable T. Murray**, 84, September 6. Member since 1969 of the Jefferson Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Kerry L. Scott.

**Ivan J. Eash**, 57, September 2. Member for 33 years of the Elkhart First Brethren Church, which he served in many positions, including chairman of the Ministry of Property, moderator, choir member, president of the Men's Fellowship, and building committee member. He also held various district and state offices and various offices in the state and national Laymen's Organization. Services by Pastor Timothy P. Garner and Elder Mark Baker.

**Turner L. Mathias**, 76, August 18. Member of the Mathias Brethren Church. Services by Rev. Ernest Hatterman and Pastor Jerry Fike.

**John Robert Hepner**, 78, August 26. Member of The Brethren Church in New Lebanon. Services by Pastor Robert Dillard.

**Mrs. Lera Via**, 88, August 23. Member for 38 years of the Oak Hill First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor William Skeldon.

**Blanche Landis**, 83, July 26. Charter member of the Carmel Brethren Church

Alberta has taught Sunday school for 60 years, and Keith has co-taught with her since their marriage 26 years ago.

**Brethren Weekend** is scheduled for October 14-15 at Ashland University. Brethren high school juniors and seniors are invited to visit the campus, meet Brethren faculty, stay overnight in a residence hall with AU Brethren students, see a football game, attend a musical, and learn of the many opportunities available to Brethren Students at Ashland University.

The second annual **World Missions Fair** of the Northern Indiana Brethren Churches was held August 26 at the Ardmore Brethren Church. More than \$2,200 was raised for World Missions by the auction and the 12 food booths at the fair.

**The Johnstown Third Brethren**

and prior to that a longtime member of the Flora First Brethren Church. Services by Carmel Pastor James Miller.

### Weddings

**Pam Weichers to Ross Todd**, September 30, at the Waterloo First Brethren Church; Pastor Lynn Mercer officiating. Bride a member of the Waterloo First Brethren Church.

**Kimberly Michelle Mercer to Adam Kent Bennett**, September 24, at the Muncie First Brethren Church; Pastor P. Keith Bennett, father of the groom, officiating. Groom a member of the Muncie First Brethren Church.

**Diane Rehkopf to Thomas McConahay**, September 23, at the Park Street Brethren Church; Rev. Rex McConahay, brother of the groom, officiating. Groom a member of the Park Street Brethren Church.

**Dawn Lang to John Batchelder**, September 15, at the Waterloo First Brethren Church; Pastor Lynn Mercer officiating. Bride a member of the Waterloo First Brethren Church.

**Tanya Blake to Michael Stahly**, September 3, at the Ardmore Brethren Church; Pastor Gene Eckerley officiating. Bride a member of the North Liberty Brethren Church.

**Julie A. Wise to David E. Rahn, Sr.**, September 2, at the Elkhart First Brethren Church; Pastor Timothy P. Garner officiating. Members of the Elkhart First Brethren Church.

**Joan M. Piper to Roger A. Scott**, August 26, at the Tiosa Brethren Church; Pastor George C. Brown officiating. Members of the Tiosa Brethren Church.

**Deborah Doreen Clupper to Kevin Lee Wolford**, August 19, at the Tiosa Brethren Church; Pastor George C. Brown officiating.

**Mrs. Patricia Liller to Dr. William Fen-**

**Church** and the neighboring Morrellville Church of the Brethren held their first ever joint Bible school this past summer. According to the report, it was a great experience, which they hope to repeat next summer.

**National Pornography Awareness Week** will be observed from October 29 to November 4. The purpose of this observance is to bring an awareness to Americans of the destructiveness of pornography. The Social Responsibilities Commission of General Conference encourages Brethren people to be informed about this event.

**Dr. JoAnn Ford Watson** has been named assistant professor of Christian theology at Ashland Theological Seminary. An Ashland native, Watson was a part-time professor at the seminary from 1984 to 1986.

**der**, August 19, at Pittsburgh, Pa.; Rev. Jim Rowsey officiating. Bride a member of the St. James Brethren Church.

**Joleen Hochstetler to Howie Mathews**, August 5, at the Milford First Brethren Church; Pastor Paul Tinkel officiating. Members of the Milford First Brethren Church.

**Kathy Johnson to Tim Eckerley**, August 5, at the Ardmore Brethren Church; Pastor Gene Eckerley, father of the groom, officiating. Groom a member of the Ardmore Brethren Church.

**Laura K. White to Gary A. Calvert**, July 22, at the Tiosa Brethren Church; Rev. Steve Barber and Pastor George C. Brown officiating. Members of the Tiosa Brethren Church.

**Wendi Beatty to Troy Buchanan**, July 15, at the Peru First Brethren Church; Rev. George C. Brown officiating. Members of the Peru First Brethren Church.

### Goldenaires

**Frank and Betty Gavlock**, 50th, October 28. Members of the Waterloo First Brethren Church.

**Myron and Ruthe Lamb**, 60th, October 17. Members of the Waterloo First Brethren Church.

**Kenny and Evelyn Kerr**, 50th, October 1. Members of the Bryan First Brethren Church.

**Mace and Annabelle Griffith**, 50th, September 2. Members of the St. James Brethren Church.

### Membership Growth

**Flora**: 3 by baptism

**Milford**: 2 by transfer

**Ardmore**: 2 by baptism

**Oak Hill**: 1 by baptism

**New Lebanon**: 5 by baptism

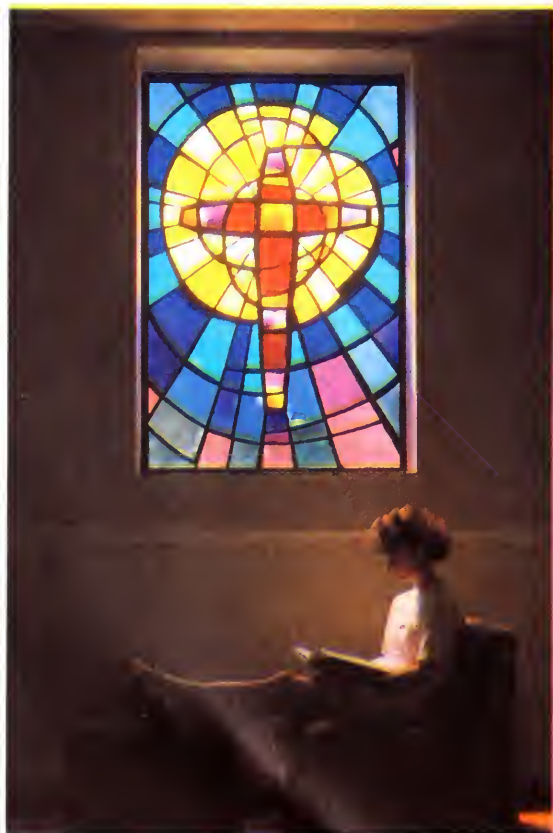




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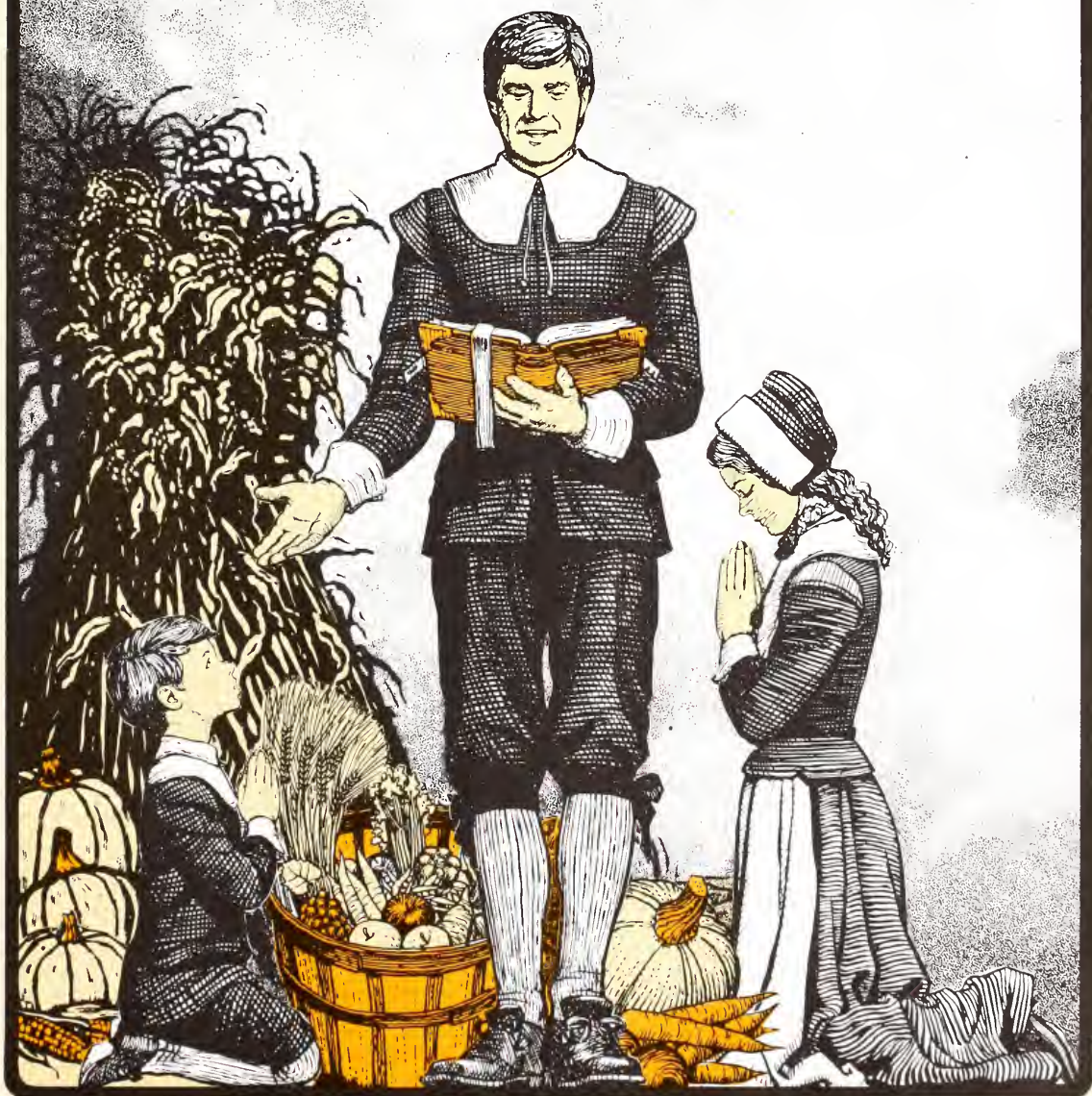
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# THE BRETHREN **Evangelist**

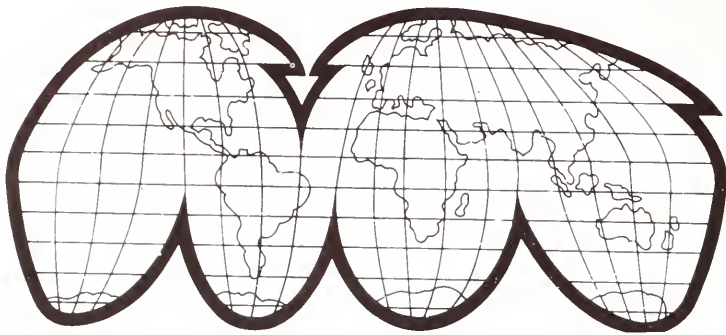
NOVEMBER 1989

## *Let Us Give Thanks*





# Developing a Global Vision



by  
**John  
Maust**

## Opportunities at Our Doorstep

**R**ECENTLY I received a prayer letter from some Peruvian missionaries who said that they are living in London, England, where they are trying to evangelize Pakistani Muslims. Then I spoke with a friend in Miami, Fla., who, interestingly enough, is trying to share Christ with Pakistani immigrants in *that* city.

After hearing about all the Pakistanis in London and Miami (and probably other cities of the world), I started wondering, Who's left in Pakistan?

Actually, I'm not picking on the Pakistanis. They represent only a tiny part of a worldwide phenomenon in which thousands, if not millions, of people are living in countries where they were not born. These expatriates include college students, war refugees, political exiles, and plain old fortune-seekers.

Some take all their belongings and family members to their new homes. Others arrive at new lands in rickety boats with only tattered clothes draping their bodies. But all share the same goal — survival in a strange land.

### Moses moved too

Actually, Scripture shows that immigration started long before passports and "green cards." The Bible's list of illustrious "refugees" includes: Abraham, who packed up for Canaan; Joseph, taken in slavery to Egypt; Moses, who ran for his life to Midian; and Joseph, Mary, and baby Jesus, who fled to Egypt to escape

state-inspired terrorism.

Even the people of Israel were uneasy aliens in Egypt. After the Exodus, God ordered them, in turn, to accept and respect the aliens among them.

God expresses His love for people of every race and origin throughout Scripture, beginning in Genesis with His promise to bless "all peoples on earth" through Abraham. So it almost goes without saying that we, too, should accept and love new neighbors, no matter what language rolls off their tongues.

### More open to Christ

Research indicates that people going through major life changes are more open to new ideas. That's why immigrants frequently show greater interest in the gospel in their new land than they did in their home countries. That's also why missionary outreach to these same people is especially strategic. So we need to reach out to immigrants — not as evangelistic headhunters, but as friends in Christian love.

It's tough living in a strange country, where just going to the grocery store can be a traumatic experience. Our foreign neighbors sometimes just need a friend to help with errands or interpretation.

"By the rivers of Babylon, we sat and wept when we remembered," said the exiled psalmist in Babylon. Similarly, many immigrants today — oceans away from family and friends — may also need a listening ear or a shoulder to cry on.

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***"With so many internationals coming within range of U.S. churches, God seems to be making our missionary task that much easier for us."***

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The church I attend has found success with a conversational English ministry, which offers foreign students both practical and spiritual benefits. Attendees get something of the English language, plus new friends and exposure to a church and the gospel message.

### More alike than we think

Interestingly, once the language gap is bridged, we find out how much we have in common with people from other nations. Doesn't just about everybody seek peace, purpose, and some degree of prosperity in life?

Among Christians, international barriers come crashing down even faster. Maybe you've met fellow Christians overseas and sensed that immediate bond of warmth and friendship only explained by our common bond in Christ. As the Apostle Paul said, in Christ "there is neither Jew nor Greek."

Considering all the groups in today's global village, maybe it's good to remember that in God's eyes there are just two kinds of people: Christians and non-Christians, or people who follow Jesus and people who don't.

The Christian missionary goes to people who fit the latter category — those who don't trust Jesus and who may have never heard about Him. Baseball jargon says, "Hit it where they ain't." Missions philosophy might say, "Go where they ain't [Christians, that is]" — whether they are Pakistanis in London or Latins in El Paso.

With so many internationals coming within range of U.S. churches, God seems to be making our missionary task that much easier for us. Will we take advantage of the opportunities? [†]

# THE BRETHREN Evangelist

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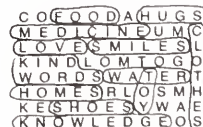
## Cover

"Let Us Give Thanks." If the Pilgrims had reason to give thanks, we have much more reason to do so. For some idea starters on what we should be thankful for, see the article on page 10.

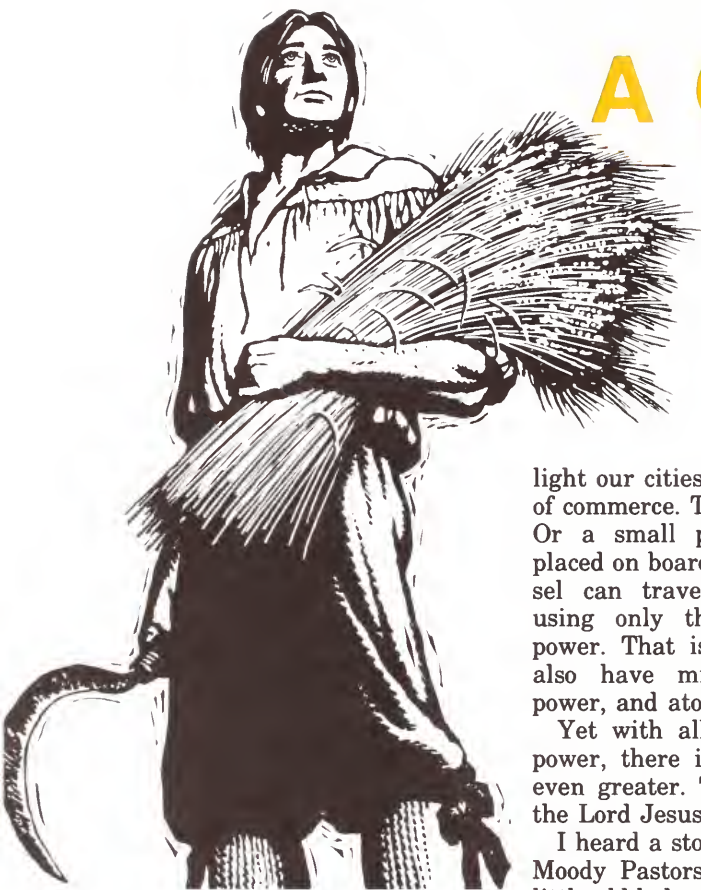
Also in this issue (on page 11) is the first of four articles on the 1990 General Conference theme — "Be Authentic Disciples" — which are being written by Moderator Mary Ellen Drushal. The remaining three articles will be spaced at intervals throughout the rest of the Conference year.

## Answers to Little Crusader Page:

Things to Share: The answers are circled on the puzzle at the right.







# A Call For Laborers

By James F. Black

light our cities and turn the wheels of commerce. That is electric power. Or a small piece of "matter" is placed on board a ship and that vessel can travel around the world using only that small source of power. That is nuclear power. We also have missile power, rocket power, and atomic power.

Yet with all of these sources of power, there is one source that is even greater. That power source is the Lord Jesus Christ.

I heard a story this past spring at Moody Pastors Conference about a little old lady who knew what it was to experience the *power* of the Lord Jesus Christ in her life. This woman loved the Lord and loved serving Him. But she had an atheistic neighbor who hated her and hated the Lord whom she served.

One day the little old lady discovered that she had no food. The cupboards were bare; the refrigerator was bare; and her pocketbook was empty. She did what she usually did under these circumstances: she prayed. "Lord Jesus, I have no food; I have no money; but I *do* have You. So I again claim Your promise to provide. Display Your power once again in my life. Amen."

While she was praying, her neighbor was out trimming his hedges and overheard her prayer. He said to himself, "This time I'll prove to her once and for all that there is no God." He ran to his truck, drove to the grocery store, and bought six full bags of groceries. Then he drove back home, carried the groceries to the old lady's porch, rang the doorbell, and hid behind the shrubs.

The lady came to the door, opened

it, and looked at the groceries. Then she shouted, "The Lord did it!" The man jumped out from behind the hedges and said, "No, I did it!" The lady ran down main street shouting, "The Lord did it!" waving her hands in praise. Running behind her was her neighbor, yelling, "No, I did it!"

This went on until the man caught her, turned her around, and shouted, "Why do you keep saying, 'The Lord did it!'? I did it, and I can prove it! I have a receipt for the groceries. I can tell you everything that's in those bags, and the grocer is my witness!"

Without blinking an eye the lady replied, "Not only did the Lord do it, but He had the devil pay the bill."

That lady knew the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. I would like to talk to you about tapping into that power — the greatest source of power available to mankind, the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In fact, the Gospel of Jesus Christ has such a powerful impact on people's lives, it's a crying shame more people aren't spreading it around.

During the Amsterdam '83 Congress on Evangelism, the daily newspapers were filled with the news of the escalation of the war in Lebanon. Many were dying. There was no trust. The Israelis blamed the Syrians. The Syrians blamed the Lebanese. The Lebanese blamed the Israelis. The land was filled with a deep bitterness from decades of hatred, suspicion, and brutality. Nothing was going to bring these three nations together.

But at Amsterdam '83, at the very time that the fighting was going on in Lebanon, three men sat at a small table drinking coffee and enjoying one another's fellowship. Three men: an Israeli, a Syrian, and a Lebanese. What hundreds of hours of

ON MAY 18, 1980, Mount St. Helens in Washington State exploded with what is probably the most awesome display of the power of nature that the modern world has ever witnessed. At 8:32 a.m. the explosion ripped 1,300 feet off the top of the mountain with a force of 10 million tons of TNT — roughly equal to 500 Hiroshimas. Sixty people were killed instantly, most of them by a blast of 300-degree heat traveling at 200 mph. The blast leveled 150-foot Douglas fir trees as far as 17 miles away. A total of 3.2 billion board-feet of lumber was destroyed — enough to build 200,000 3-bedroom homes. *Now that's power!*

We are living in an age of power — tremendous power! We go to Niagara Falls or to any of a number of dams, and we think of how much power goes out from those dams to

*Rev. Black is pastor of the Gretna Brethren Church near Bellefontaine, Ohio. This article is an edited version of a message Rev. Black delivered at General Conference.*

## ***"The Gospel of Jesus Christ has such a powerful impact on people's lives, it's a crying shame more people aren't spreading it around!"***

secular negotiations could not do; what thousands of miles of travel by diplomats could not do; what millions of dollars invested in man-made solutions could not do — the Good News of Jesus Christ accomplished!

You know, the Gospel of Jesus Christ has such a powerful impact on people's lives, it's a crying shame more people aren't spreading it around.

A young man grew up in an unchurched family, totally without God — hostile, in fact, toward God. He was known in Michigan as a "violinist" — a person who shoots game out of season. He abused alcohol daily. But the Holy Spirit began working on him. He was driving drunk one night and came upon a sign at the corner of a country road. The sign quoted Amos 4:12: "Prepare to Meet Your God."

### **Convicted by the Spirit**

At first the man laughed, but soon the sign began to wear on him. He had to pass it on a regular basis, and slowly he was convicted by the Spirit. At this time he came into contact with a group of Christians who led him through the book, *The Uniqueness of Jesus* (part of the 10 Basic Steps Toward Christian Maturity series.) It took about a year for his old habits to die, but finally, in the back room of his trailer home, he got down on his knees and gave his life to Jesus Christ.

Today he pastors a church in our community that has grown from 15 to more than 100 people. He has been involved in jail ministry and currently has a ministry to those recovering from drug and alcohol abuse. He also has a ministry of encouragement to me and other pastors in the area.

All of this happened because of the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, a Gospel that has such a powerful impact on people's lives that it's a crying shame more people aren't spreading it around.

One more story: It's about a young woman who works in our school system. She lived what she termed a chaotic, unsettled, unsatisfying life. She had to get married as a teenager; she had a problem with alcohol; she decided early in her marriage to leave her husband as soon as her daughter was out of high school. During the next 18 years, two more children were born; more alcohol was consumed; her life became a shambles. The daughter graduated from high school, and the woman, in keeping with the promise she had made to herself 18 years earlier, decided to leave.

But something happened. Her husband accepted Christ, and a local pastor began meeting in their home to disciple him. The woman wanted nothing to do with this, so she hid in the kitchen. But without her realizing it, the gospel began to work on her. Months later she found herself flat on her back in a hospital bed — depressed and discouraged. The pastor called on her, as he had done many times before. He found her drapes pulled, the curtain between the beds pulled, and her head covered by the sheets. He walked to her bedside, said a simple prayer, and asked, "Are you ready?"

Down came the sheet. She said, "Yes," and she accepted Jesus Christ as her Savior and Lord. Just last week she told me, "Now my life is more serene; I am more thoughtful and more patient with others; and Jesus Christ is in control of my life."

### **The gospel makes a difference**

Do you hear what I'm saying? The Gospel of Jesus Christ has such a powerful impact on people's lives, it's a crying shame more people aren't spreading it around! For some of these people, the impact was immediate. For others, it was a process. But the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ made an impact. It made a difference in their lives.

I could tell more stories like these, but it is enough to say that lives are

being changed by the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Despair is being replaced by hope; pessimism by optimism; depression by confidence; sadness by joy.

When people willingly remove themselves from the throne of their lives and yield to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, positive things take place. Our Lord promised: "But you will receive power when My Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be My witnesses . . ." (Acts 1:8). We know this to be true. With this knowledge, why aren't more people spreading the gospel around?

### **Have we seen a difference?**

Let's look at ourselves as a denomination for a moment. Has it made a difference in our church to "Seek to Know the Lord"? Has it made a difference to "Practice What We Know"? Has it made a difference to "Pray Without Ceasing"? Has it made a difference to acknowledge that "Jesus is Lord"? Has it made a difference in your life? In the life of your church?

The Chinese bamboo tree does absolutely nothing — at least it seems that way — for the first four years after it is planted. Then suddenly, some time during the fifth year, it shoots up 90 feet in 60 days. Would you say that that tree grew in nine weeks or in five years?

I think our lives are akin to that bamboo tree. I believe God wants us — both as individuals and as a denomination — to be successful in ministry. Yet, success is not always obvious. Sometimes we put forth effort, put forth effort, put forth effort — and nothing *seems* to be happening. But I believe that if we do the right things long enough, we *will* see results!

Good things *have* been happening in The Brethren Church. We are alive and well. Yet, do you remember that only six years ago The Brethren Church was all but proclaimed dead — or at least dying? It was at that very

(next page)



***"Jesus Christ is Lord of all! And because . . . the greatest need in The Brethren Church today is for laborers in the harvest field, we must remember as well that He is Lord of the harvest."***



moment, I believe, that the bamboo tree was planted. It was at that moment that a cry went out from the pulpit at General Conference. Dr. Don Rinehart, in his August 9, 1983, Moderator's Address, said:

It is imperative that we take seriously the exhortation to "Seek to know the Lord and practice what we know." Brethren, we stand on the threshold of a second century of ministry, and there has never been a time when we have had a greater need for revival. I am referring to the need of having our lives filled with the Spirit of God — to rekindle the gift of God within us.

*1983 Conference Annual*, page 3

The gift of God was "rekindled" at that time in *my* heart, and, I believe, in the hearts of many of you. In the past six years we truly have been seeking to know the Lord and then practicing what we know. This past year, Moderator Ken Sullivan has encouraged us to acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all areas of our lives and to live under His Lordship — in other words, to "practice what we know." He wrote these lines in the May 1989 issue of *THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST* (p. 10).

It is an amazing thing to see God move a people toward a desired end! His hand surely has been at work among the Brethren, for we have observed our people expressing a willingness to submit to Christ's Lordship in both word and deed.

"Seek to know the Lord, and practice what you know." What do we know about the Lord Jesus Christ?

We know that Jesus is Lord **not** because of a democratic vote. We know that Jesus is Lord **not** because of popular acclaim. We know that Jesus is Lord **not** because of prevailing opinion. Instead we **know** that Jesus is Lord because "by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. . . . so that in everything he might have the supremacy" (Col. 1:16-18, *NIV*).

### **Jesus is Lord of the harvest**

Every Christian belief; every act of obedience; every ministry of the church begins with this premise: Jesus is Lord! (See *EVANGELIST*, Oct. 1988, pg. 11). That is what we know! He is Lord of lords (Rev. 19:16); Lord of kings (Dan. 2:47); Lord of heaven (Dan. 5:23); Lord of all the earth (Josh. 3:13); and Lord of the universe (Zech. 6:5). Jesus Christ is Lord of all! And because I personally feel that the greatest need in The Brethren Church today is for laborers in the harvest field, we must remember as well that He is Lord of the harvest.

Remember, the Gospel of Jesus Christ has a powerful impact on people's lives. We need more people willing to spread the Good News around. **More than anything else**, we need laborers, workers in the harvest. We must, therefore, cry out to the Lord of the harvest for workers; people willing to share the powerful Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Dr. Hudson Taylor did just that. As founder of the China Inland Mission, Dr. Taylor had nearly 1,000 missionaries in the interior of China at the turn of the century. In one year alone, Dr. Taylor's group of laborers lost 38 missionaries through death. But others were trained and ready to take their place. How was this done? Many times Dr. Taylor was asked how he recruited so many laborers. His answer was this: "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will

send forth labourers into His harvest (Matt. 9:38, *KJV*). Each year by faith, Taylor and his colleagues claimed a specific number of new personnel in prayer, and God honored their specific request.

This was the strategy Jesus presented in Matthew 9:38. We are to **ask for laborers**. Jesus says, in essence, "Cry out to God for laborers in the harvest."

What is a "laborer"? The term refers to a "field hand," "an agricultural worker," "one who works for hire." A laborer gets blisters; his feet get sore; his back aches; the sun scorches his skin; and the dust of the field gets into his eyes, nose, and mouth. The reason laborers are few may have something to do with the term itself. By nature we would rather be a supervisor, manager, director, or executive.

But the world does not get fed unless the field hand does his work. Somebody must harvest the crop. When the grain is ripe, it must be brought in. This is the picture Jesus is painting in Matthew 9. He is not talking about plowing, harrowing, planting, cultivating, and so on. He is talking about reaping a stand of grain that is ready to be gathered.

### **Pray for laborers**

Jesus commands us to "pray for laborers." Why? Because laborers are few. They were few in Jesus' day. They are few today. Churchgoers are many. Seminars are many. Workshops are many. Conferences are many. Programs are many. Fund-raisers are many. But laborers are few!

Let me ask you something: Is Jesus Lord? He **IS** Lord of all, isn't He? Then is He not Lord of the harvest as well? Therefore, **He** is in control of the harvest. So we should ask **Him** to "send out" laborers. That word "send out" means "thrust out, force out, as from urgent necessity" (*Word Studies in the New Testament*, Vincent, Eerdmans, Vol. 1, p. 57). "Ask the Lord of the harvest to send out, thrust out laborers into

***"Try to visualize it in your minds: The Brethren Church with a band of laborers ministering to the needs of people — equipped to reach the lost and edify the saved; laborers whose lives are given over completely to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and whose focus in the Great Commission is to 'make disciples.'"***

His harvest field." Jesus' words in Matthew 9:38 still stand! The need has not changed, unless to have become greater. The work of the harvest laborer is the strategic key for meeting the truly great need of this world: *People need Jesus Christ.* And for the revival of the church and the execution of the Great Commission of Jesus Christ, **we need laborers!**

Everything else is secondary. Better programs are secondary. Bigger buildings are secondary. Reorganization is secondary. **We need laborers.** Try to visualize it in your minds: The Brethren Church with a band of laborers ministering to the needs of people — equipped to reach the lost and edify the saved; laborers whose lives are given over completely to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and whose focus in the Great Commission is to "make disciples." **May their number increase!**

### **The solution**

And it can. How? Here, in Matthew 9:35-38, is the solution. It is not a solution reached by some committee or task force on evangelism and church growth. It is the Lord's solution. The Lord of the harvest Himself said: **"Pray for Laborers."** He will send them out; force them out; thrust them out.

It's such a simple solution — so simple in fact, that we often overlook it. That was the frank admission of a carload of pastors who were attending a five-day conference on disciple-making. They were asked to discuss among themselves overnight the problem of the shortage of laborers. The next day they were asked to share their conclusions. The spokesman for the group stood, hesitated, then said, "We have all agreed that laborers are few because of our own prayerlessness."

We need to pray for laborers in the Lord's harvest. Jesus commands us to do so.

Where have we come so far in this message? We've found that the Gospel of Jesus Christ has a powerful

impact on people. We've found that The Brethren Church has had its flame rekindled. We've acknowledged, however, that we still need laborers. And we've noted the Lord's solution to the problem: prayer. So what do we do now? We pray for laborers. We need to stop being so busy with this program and that strategy that we forget to pray.

What place does prayer for laborers have in your life today? Do you know anyone who makes this a priority in his or her prayer life?

Praying for laborers works. It is effective. As proof of this, let me tell you one more story. It is about a young man who grew up in a Christian home, surrounded by loving parents and a great church family. Yet, he still lived a rebellious life. He had accepted Christ as Savior years earlier but was not living under His Lordship. He did some things his parents and his church family would not have been proud of, things that surely tore at the Lord's heart.

Then at the age of 18, as a Summer Crusader, he experienced the Lord's hold on his life. The power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ made an impact. He felt called to be a "laborer." Yet, even then he fought that call. He got married. He and his wife had two children and good-paying jobs. They bought a house and planned on staying where they were — ignoring, in a sense, God's call.

### **The power of the gospel**

But the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ continued to push. I mentioned earlier that the word translated "send out" means to "force out as from urgent necessity." That young man learned the truth of that definition. It was true because people were praying to the Lord of the harvest to send that young man out. His parents prayed; his wife prayed; his friends prayed; and his home church in Milledgeville, Ill., prayed.

Today, that young man is a laborer in the Lord's field of Bellefontaine, Ohio.

I stand as living proof of the power of prayer for laborers. I stand as living proof that the Gospel of Jesus Christ has a powerful impact on people's lives. I proclaim to you, in the words of the Apostle Paul, that "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes . . ." (Rom. 1:16, *NIV*).

### **A call to respond**

As your response to the power of the gospel, I would invite you, encourage you, exhort you to do two things. Here is what they are:

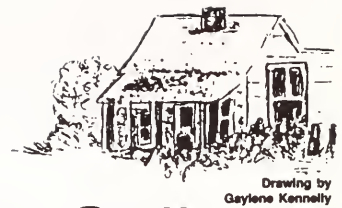
*First, claim that power and pray for laborers.* Take a sheet of paper and write out Matthew 9:37-38 at the top and number from one to ten below. Then write down the names of those you will make a commitment to pray for — praying that the Lord of the harvest would send them out. You might want to write down the names of your sons or daughters. Or there may be other youth in your church, fellow laymen, sisters in the W.M.S., friends in your Sunday school class, your own parents.

I have six young men in the Gretna Brethren Church for whom I am praying that the Lord will send them out. You should have a list as well. So take a moment to write down names of persons for whom you will commit to pray.

*Then secondly, I challenge you to proclaim that power by becoming a laborer.* Perhaps you have written your own name down on your list, or you know that you should have done so. Is the Lord of the harvest "pulling" you? Perhaps He is calling you right now — for the first time or once again — to become a pastor, a missionary, a church planter. Perhaps He is calling you to a more wholehearted and committed service right where you are in your local church.

If He is calling you, be assured without a doubt, that someone is praying for you. If He is calling you, be assured without a doubt, that He will not stop calling you, until you answer. [†]





# I'll Go When I Hear Him Call

If you've ever considered helping with a mission service project but were uncertain whether or not you could handle it, this account of her experience by Gaylene Kennelly may give you the courage to give it a try.

*If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.*

I John 3:17, 18; NIV

**A**CTION . . . I've been an active person all my life. I like doing things, being involved with others, working, loving, laughing, and crying with those around me. The words in I John have special meaning for me in that I can love in word and tongue AND act out that love with action.

When the opportunity came to go to Appalachia on a work mission sponsored by Park Street Brethren Church, I signed up to go. I didn't give much thought to how I'd work out the details, for I knew that God and I would work it out somehow.

I have a husband and two young children whom I take care of, and when I announced that I was going on the mission project, they looked at me as if I'd just signed up for the next Discovery mission. "Why, whatever will YOU do, Mom?" was the question they all asked.

I assured them that I would do whatever needed to be done — pound nails, tote things, hold things, paint, do repairs, or even help build a house if the Lord so willed. They

*Mrs. Kennelly is an active participant in the life of Park Street Brethren Church, Ashland, Ohio. The mission project she describes in this article took place in the summer of 1988.*

*This article was written by Mrs. Kennelly at the request of the General Conference Social Concerns Committee (now superseded by the Social Responsibilities Commission).*

snickered and let the matter rest, confident that in the several weeks before this would take place, I'd give up the idea and decide not to go.



*The writer, Gaylene Kennelly, in front of the project sign at the service center in Jonesville, Virginia.*

Surprisingly, even my friends and other family members had the same attitude. Okay, so I don't look like I could do all those things. Nevertheless, I had no doubt that I could do anything I set my mind to. Besides, several other women had also signed up, and that gave me comfort. I was determined to go, and even more determined that when I went, that I wanted to play a major role — not stand on the sidelines or just do the cooking or picking up. I wanted to really do the work assigned to us.

Now folks, let's face it. Construction work is not one of my talents. In

spite of my bravado before others, I wondered inwardly if I would really be able to be a part of the action. So I asked my Lord that the task set before us would be one I could help with. I acknowledged that I was doing this in His name and prayed that whatever I did in Appalachia would be worthy of Him. Then I left it in His hands, confident that it would be all right.

In the weeks of preparation, all but two of the other women backed out. I thought, "If something happens to these two, I surely won't be able to go as the only woman!" So I again turned to the Lord and asked Him to keep these two gals healthy and willing to go. My prayer was answered, for they stuck it out and were a part of the team.

Just prior to our departure, I had a major medical problem and things didn't look too good for me. In fact, I had an appointment with the doctor to set a date for surgery. So, again, I turned to my beloved Father, saying, "I can't go if I'm sick. I want to do this for you, Father. Please help me!"

The day I went to the doctor, I sat in his office expecting the worst. Then cheerily he said, "Well, Gaylene, I don't want to do surgery now. I'd like to try something else first."

Well, I could have jumped up and kissed the man. Instead I waited until I got out to the parking lot, then shouted, "Thank you, Lord!" Then I proceeded to cry all the way home.

It was rumored that our project would be to put a roof on a house. I'll admit I'm not too fond of heights. In fact, I'm downright scared of them. So I thought, "Oh, boy, this should prove interesting!" But remember-

ing that I had given these matters to the Lord, I pushed this concern out of my mind.

Plans progressed for the mission trip until one fine, sunny, hot morning we set off from the church parking lot loaded with saws, hammers, and other tools, eager to meet the challenge that lay before us, whatever it might be.

When we arrived at the service center, the woman who welcomed us said that yes, they did have a roof that was in terrible shape which they wanted us to replace. . . . So, the next day, armed with our supplies and lots of enthusiasm, we headed for our project site.

Now when I think of a roof, I think of something with a steep pitch that peaks 30 or 40 feet above the ground — something that when you stand at the top of and look down makes you feel dizzy. So all the way to the work site I felt an uneasiness in the pit of my stomach. Then as we approached the site, I craned my neck to get a first glimpse of the house. There, to my delight, sat a small house with a roof that was so low-pitched that it was nearly flat.

You know, I think the Lord has a sense of humor. It was as if He were tapping me on the head and saying, "Okay, Gaylene, how does that suit



*The house on which the mission team worked. When Gaylene, who is not fond of heights, got her first glimpse of the house, she was much relieved to see that it had a low, nearly flat roof.*

you?" He had not let me down. He never does! He had provided us with a job that truly needed to be done and one I knew I could help with.

We did put a new roof on that little house. We also repaired the porch, replaced broken windows, and built a new chimney. And I was able to do my part. It was hard work; dirty work. And it was hot — 100° or more every day! But you know what? I liked it! We were working for the Lord, and that was satisfying.

For me there was also another meaning to this experience. Several years ago a tornado blew the roof off

our home, and we were given a love offering to help pay to replace it. The amount given was the exact amount it took to pay for the new roof. The Lord provided us a new roof through people who gave in His name. Now, through this service project, He provided me a way to repay that gift of love by doing the same for someone else!

The Lord not only enabled me to go on this mission project by answering all my prayers, but He did it in ways I'll never forget. It was a great experience, and it all started with a willingness to work for the Lord while leaving the details in His hands.

I know we touched the hearts of those we met and made a difference in their lives. They touched our lives and made a difference in us as well. I'll go again . . . if the Lord is willing.\*

*I will go where my Lord takes me  
I will follow Him anywhere  
He's the great enabler  
His love I'll gladly share  
No matter what the task might be  
How great or how small  
To help further His kingdom  
I'll go when I hear Him call! [†]*

\*Mrs. Kennelly did "go again." The experience described in this article took place in the summer of 1988. This past summer (1989) she went with a Park Street mission team to Lost Creek, Ky., where they spent a week working at Riverside Christian Training School.

**Note:** If you or your church would like more information about sending out mission teams, write to the Pastoral Staff, Park Street Brethren Church, 606 Park Street, Ashland, OH 44805.



*Other members of the mission team on which Gaylene served were (l. to r.) Doug Mills, Dorman Ronk, Clay Burford, Mike Gleason (at that time Park Street's Pastor of Evangelism and Discipleship and a prime mover in organizing and promoting Park Street's mission teams), Ruth Rogers, and Nancy Burford. This was one of two Park Street mission teams that worked in the Appalachia Service Project in the summer of 1988. This past summer, Park Street sent out four mission teams — one to the Appalachia Service Project, two to Riverside Christian Training School at Lost Creek, Ky., and one to Mexico.*



**I**F THE PILGRIMS found reason to be thankful, how much more ought we to give thanks to the Lord for his abundant blessings!

During the year between their arrival at Plymouth and the first Thanksgiving, the Pilgrims endured great hardships, were plagued by disease, and came close to starvation. More than half of the group

you are eating and say a silent prayer of thanksgiving for each loved one who is there.)

In addition to our families, there are numerous other people who bless our lives: friends, fellow Christians, the people with whom we work or go to school, pastors, teachers, and many others. Let's thank God for them all.

richly enjoy — God's love, Christ's atonement, the indwelling Holy Spirit, the Bible, forgiveness from sin, everlasting life, the church.

This list of blessings is not exhaustive by any means. But it is surely sufficient to remind each of us that we have much for which to be thankful.

But a word of warning. In giving

## What Do I Have For Which to Give Thanks?

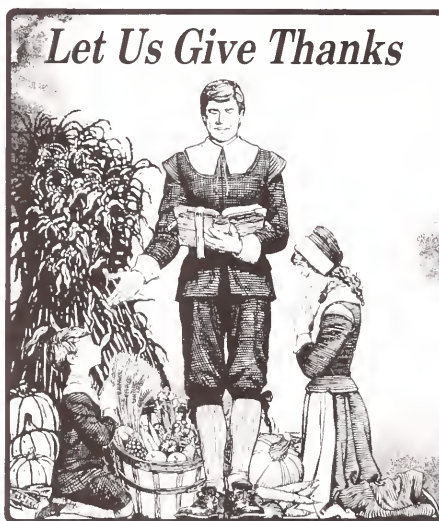
died. Nevertheless, after their first harvest, they set aside a time of thanksgiving to the Lord for all His blessings.

Certainly, we today have much for which to be thankful. Johnson Oatman, Jr., said it well in these words to a Christian hymn: "Count your many blessings, name them one by one, / And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done."

This is advice we ought to heed throughout the year, but especially at Thanksgiving. If we don't spend much time thinking about our blessings, we may decide that we don't have much for which to be thankful. But if we take time to count our many blessings, we may indeed be surprised at what the Lord has done for us — things for which we should be very thankful.

One place to start counting is with the basic physical necessities — food and drink, clothes, and shelter. We tend to take these for granted, but many people around the world lack one or more of them. Not only do we have them, we have them conveniently and in abundance — nourishing food of great variety in season and out; water as convenient as the nearest faucet; not just one or two sets of clothes, but something to wear for every occasion; and comfortable homes with lots of furnishings.

But this is only the beginning of things for which we can be thankful. Among our blessings to be counted are people. This includes our family members — husband or wife, parents, children, brothers and sisters, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins. (If you are with family on Thanksgiving day, look around the table as



Also among our blessings to be counted are life itself and whatever degree of health we enjoy. This, in turn, reminds us that we ought to give thanks for the medical care that helps us maintain our health, for doctors and nurses (dentists, too), hospitals, medicines (from lowly aspirin to high-powered antibiotics), as well as the health insurance that helps us pay for this medical care.

As we think beyond our own personal needs, we become aware of other things for which we can be thankful — work, business and industry, education (schools, books, knowledge), laws and law enforcement agencies, and our nation itself, with the freedoms it provides.

Then there are also life's intangibles — love, joy, beauty, laughter, peace, music, nature. These things enrich our lives — make them worth living. We certainly want to thank God for them.

Most importantly, we need to count the spiritual blessings we so

thanks, let us be careful lest we adopt the attitude of superiority and pride demonstrated by the Pharisee Jesus describes in Luke 18:11. We must be cautious lest our prayer become, "God, I thank you that you have blessed me so abundantly, and that I am not like the starving in Sudan, the lost in Pakistan, or those living under Communist rule."

While we are indeed thankful for our abundance, our salvation, our freedom, and all other blessings we enjoy, we need to express our thanks without any element of pride, as if we deserve all that we have. Rather, we should thank God in deepest humility, recognizing that but for His grace, we would have nothing.

And finally, as we thank God for all our blessings, we should realize that we have a responsibility to share those blessings with others.

The Apostle Paul summarizes both these final ideas in some instructions in I Timothy 6:17-18. He wrote, "Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share."

While we may not normally consider ourselves rich, when we count our blessings, then humbly look at the world's needs, we discover that we are rich indeed. When this discovery causes us not only to pour out grateful praise to God, but also motivates us to do good, to be generous, and to share with others, then we are truly thankful. [†]

— Richard C. Winfield, editor

# Be Authentic Disciples: Love Me

The first of four articles by Moderator Mary Ellen Drushal on the 1990 General Conference theme.

ON A RECENT JAUNT to Mifflin Lake, I encountered a duck with an injured leg. Sitting near the water's edge, it didn't appear unusual. But when it made its way to the lake, I noticed a distinct limp.

As I watched the crippled duck hobble slowly to the water, I wondered if navigation there would be any easier than it was on land. When the duck finally began to swim, it went around and around in circles, because the injured leg did not provide enough consistent power for the duck to swim directly where it wanted to go.

Without both legs working simultaneously in nature's intended synchronization, the duck was hampered in its walk, and its swimming became laborious. Given the duck's condition, determined direction was difficult to maintain.

This crippled duck made me think of similarities between it and believers in the church. The exterior of the duck appeared quite normal — that is, until the duck began to walk and swim. On the surface, many believers appear to be committed disciples of Christ. They talk much about what the church should or should not do, and what it ought or ought not to be. Some believers are faithful in their attendance at church gatherings, yet, like the injured duck, they experience no joy walking or swimming in the murky swamp of the community. For them it is plain hard work, often seeming to go

nowhere and with little reward.

These crippled Christians claim to be Christ's disciples, but, like the duck at Mifflin Lake, they are hampered in maintaining the direction of the spiritual journey that Jesus set forth for authentic disciples. Christians who have made Jesus Lord of their lives are believers who have committed themselves to a lifestyle that is difficult to maintain without outside assistance.

God's word instructs Christians regarding the source of strength and how to obtain it, thus enabling them to become authentic disciples. John 15:4 tells disciples to abide and develop in Christ. Development takes time and requires patience to endure the process of growing. No one is promised an easy or direct path in the Christian walk.

As disciples grow and develop "in the vine," an intimate relationship emerges which brings with it a more complete understanding of the love of Christ and the responsibilities that love brings. This love, available only as we are attached to the vine, facilitates the bearing of fruit, which is the divine purpose for authentic disciples. Like the injured duck at Mifflin, the authentic disciple recognizes the need for help from an outside power source, "for apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

Unless disciples realize their dependence upon Jesus to give them direction for their journey and allow Him to heal the injuries of life, they, like the injured duck, will continue to swim around and around in circles. Nothing of significance is accomplished for Christ without depth in our relationship with Him. This relationship is validated in our as-

sociation with others. It gives authenticity to the disciple to pursue ministry with *both* feet swimming simultaneously, offering power, direction, and propulsion.

Authentic disciples have great potential to bear fruit — to become all they are meant to be in Christ — because they are attached to the vine. Authentic disciples love Christ above all others and deeply desire to serve Him.



Dr. Mary Ellen Drushal

Authentic disciples love the Lord with all their heart, their soul, their strength, their mind; and their neighbors as themselves (Luke 10:27). They are healed and freely bear fruit, which is evidence of their joy in service, while constantly abiding in the vine, daily renewing their relationship with Christ.

Are you an authentic disciple with direction for your life because you are attached to the vine? Or are you like the injured duck, swimming in circles in search of the freedom that only absolute submission to and healing in Christ can bring? Authentic disciples "abide in My love" (John 15:9b). [†]

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*Dr. Drushal is Associate Dean for Continuing Education and Associate Professor of Christian Education and Church Administration at Ashland Theological Seminary.*





# The Scoop On Home Missions

By Russell C. Gordon  
Director of Home Missions and Church Growth

**A**CCORDING TO the 1988 Statistician's Report presented to General Conference this past August, 10.4 percent of our churches are considered Home Mission churches. These churches accounted for 7.8 percent of our total Sunday school attendance; 10.9 percent of the morning worship attendance, and 15.8 percent of our total membership in 1988.

Our Home Mission churches are an important part of The Brethren Church. But if The Brethren Church is going to show any significant growth in the years to come, I am convinced that we must start more new churches.

According to Peter Wagner, the unreached peoples of the world now total almost three billion, with over 150,000 new ones being added daily. He, along with Dr. Donald McGavran and other church-growth experts, tells us that the most effective means of reaching these people is by planting new churches.

In order to reach all of the unreached peoples of the world, the church needs to plant almost three million new churches in this generation. Based on our size, that means that if we Brethren are to

do our share, we need to start 1,500 new churches in this generation!

Jeremiah 6:16 says, "Stand at the crossroads and . . . ask where the good way is, and walk in it . . ." I really believe that The Brethren Church — and our Home Missions program — is "at the crossroads." We need to ask the Lord what is "the good way" and then be prepared to "walk in it."

Ezekiel 37 can serve as a guide for us as we "stand at the crossroads" and seek the "good way" to walk. Ezekiel was standing in the Valley of Dry Bones, and God told him to prophesy to the bones. Ezekiel obeyed, and as a result "breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet . . ." (Ezek. 37:10).

God wanted His people to know that He was going to once again bring them to life as a nation. It is important to note that it was God's power that brought about the restoration of life, but He did it **through a man**.

The "Valley of Dry Bones" today is the world, and God wants to (and can) restore those bones to life — but He wants to do it **through people**. I am convinced that God wants the lost of the world to find

life through Jesus Christ. I **am convinced** that God wants to grow His Church. I **am convinced** that God wants to grow The Brethren Church. I **am convinced** that God wants our Home Mission churches to grow and be one of the means that He uses to give new life to today's Valley of Dry Bones. I **am convinced** that this will happen only if people allow God to work through them.

In Jeremiah 42:3 we are told: "Pray that the LORD your God will tell us where we should go and what we should do." Our need today is to do just that. Will you join with me, the national Mission Board, the district mission boards, and our Home Mission churches in praying for God's guidance and direction as we seek to be used by Him to grow His church? Are you willing to pray for yourself and ask, "God, where do you want me to go and what do you want me to do for you?" Then will you commit your talents, your money, your life to the task of growing the church? If it is going to happen, it will be because each of us responded to God's call in our lives.

Brethren, that's **THE SCOOP ON HOME MISSIONS!** [†]



## The Scoop on Sarver

# A Super Summer At Sarver Brethren Church

By Pastor Gerald Barr

**O**NE OF THE SEMINARS at the Butler County (Pa.) Sunday School Convention this year dealt with challenges facing the Sunday school and how they can be

met. One of the characteristics of good Sunday school management that came out during the discussion was patience. Sometimes you simply have to wait for results to

come, no matter how hard you work and how many "principles" you put into practice.

The last year and a half was a time of waiting for the Lord to ac-



*Pastor and Mrs. Gerald Barr with their son Jerry and daughter Wendy.*

comply with some things for which we had been praying for a very long time. Some difficult challenges and troublesome problems needed to be faced, and this was a time of waiting for God to get us through them.

But the summer of 1989 was a very exciting time for the Sarver Church as we saw many of those problems resolved and the struggles begin to bear fruit. God truly blessed us this summer in many ways.

We awaited the "summer slump" that traditionally hits all churches — and it never came! We did have our usual absences for vacations and other summer activities, but it seemed that every time a family was away, a family of visitors took

their place. We actually saw an increase in attendance during the summer. Six new families have begun attending and have become very exciting additions to our church family.

Along with these new people has come a new sense of enthusiasm and anticipation in the church. People are actually excited about coming to Sunday school and worship, and there is a sense of expectation in the air. The singing has been unusually good, the sharing of joys has been especially open and enthusiastic, the sermons (according to the congregation) have even

been exceptionally good, and the financial support has been steadily increasing. For all of this our Lord is to be praised!

We still face some difficult challenges, and we need your prayers and encouragement. Right now we need two additional Sunday school classes and have room for only one. Our parking lot is getting fuller and more space for cars will be needed soon. And with the auditorium now half full, we will soon be faced with the delightful challenge of providing additional worship space for the congregation.

We don't have the answers yet. Right now we are just enjoying the fact that we have these kinds of problems. [†]



*The Sarver Brethren Church building — not enough room!*



## The Scoop on Smoky Row

**T**HE STATISTICAL SHEET would again indicate that this has been a good year for Smoky Row Brethren Church. We have had nine confessions of faith, baptized eight people, and received twelve new members already this year. We have been averaging in the 80s and 90s, with an all-time high monthly average in June of 96. Giving to missions and World Relief continues to exceed our "fair share" amount. (Smoky Row ranked eighth in total giving to World Re-

lief last year in the denomination and sixth in per capita giving to Home Missions.)

But raw figures do not tell the whole story. I have come to learn that the intangibles of the life of a congregation — its unity, its mutual love and caring, its willingness to give beyond its own walls — are the more important indicators of vitality and progress.

For me, the high point of the year thus far was a planning seminar that Dr. Mary Ellen Drushal

conducted in our congregation in August. She led us through a process in which we, on the basis of our philosophy of ministry, listed needs which we perceive in our church, ranked these by priority, and developed steps necessary to meet each need.

The congregation will provide input to this process in September. Once we have incorporated their insights, we should have a "game plan" that will guide us for the next three to five

*(next page)*

# Becoming Self-Supporting At Smoky Row

By Pastor Dale R. Stoffer



years. The seminar truly helped our congregation's leadership to sharpen its focus, build consensus for the future direction of the church, and experience "the unity of the Spirit" in our midst.

The above process was especially important because we are anticipating building a much-needed educational and administrative wing in 1990 or 1991. We feel that we must be unified regarding the future direction and ministry of the church if the building process is to move forward smoothly. Be in prayer for us as we enter this process in earnest with the kick off of our building fund drive and the search for an architect this fall.

We are also hoping that the idea of Brethren construction teams aiding Home Mission churches in their building projects will be a reality when we begin construction. This concept has exciting potential for enabling Home Mission congregations to construct affordable buildings, while at the same time providing a rewarding opportunity for men and women to use their skills for the Lord's work.

A significant milestone will occur at the end of this year when the Smoky Row congregation will



*The Smoky Row congregation at worship.*

become self-supporting. This event will have been achieved through the combined efforts of many throughout the denomination who have been involved in so many ways over the last nine years.

If you played a part in establishing and growing our congregation through response to three Growth Partner Club calls; donation of skills, materials, and time for our first building; provision of gifts and loans; through surveying work or by ongoing prayer support, please

accept our grateful "Thank you!" for being co-workers with us. This "rite of passage" is the final step we hope every Home Mission church will achieve.

We are excited about what God will do in and through us at Smoky Row Brethren Church. We do not yet know what we shall become, but we do know that as our faith is, so shall be our outcome.\* [†]

\*This sentence is a paraphrase of a statement by Alexander Mack, Sr., founding father of the Brethren movement.



## The Scoop on Bloomingdale

**T**HIS has been a year of transition for the Bloomingdale Community Brethren Church. Pastor Charles Ankney resigned from the church at the beginning of the year, and the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church began seeking God's will in finding a new pastor. They were led to extend a call to me while I was pastoring the Roann, Ind., First Brethren Church. I felt led to accept the call and moved to Brandon, Fla., at the beginning of July with my wife, Jill, and our two children.

The church was without a regular pastor for a number of weeks,

which is always difficult for a small congregation. Some members became discouraged and withdrew to seek better-established churches. When we arrived, we found a core of about ten people. Of these ten, only one family lives close to the church, and they stay out of town at their place of business during the entire work week.

It would be understandable if this core group of people had become discouraged, after working long and hard to see their church grow only to see it suffering this setback. But they are not discouraged. They are excited about the

# A Year of Transition At the Bloomingdale Church

By David L. Stone



*Pastor and Mrs. David Stone and their sons Michael (l.) and Jonathan.*



*The Bloomingdale Church building — a visible location.*

work of the church. They are all pitching in and looking forward to the great future they know God has for us. These are the people who have been the most dedicated to seeing this church grow.

We have many reasons to believe that we have an exciting future in the Bloomingdale area. First, the area is growing. A new development consisting of sixty homes is going in right behind the church at this moment.

Second, our building is visible. We are on Bloomingdale Avenue, which is the major east-west road for southern Brandon and a feeder road for Interstate 75. We have already had a number of people come to worship merely because they saw our building as they drove by.

Third, we can offer those who at-

tend well-balanced, biblical Brethren teachings.

Fourth, and most important, we have a powerful God who has called us to this mission of reaching lost souls in Brandon.

It is very encouraging to hear of Brethren churches that have put us on their prayer lists for specific Sundays. We know that this is God's work and that it will be done "not by might, nor by power, but by [His] Spirit."

We have started some exciting projects designed to reach out to the lost and unchurched people all around us. We have subscribed to a service which gives listings of all the new homeowners in our area. Each month we receive about 300 names. We have prepared a mailing to send to all of them and in-

tend to follow that with a phone call to all those with listed phone numbers.

We had a good time recently getting together for supper followed by work on the mailing. We challenged the people of the church to come and "stuff yourself and stuff some envelopes." It was interesting that we had as many visitors as church members attend this event. Maybe they felt more comfortable doing something for the church than just attending a service.

My wife, Jill, has started a mother's support group. We hope this will increase the church's visibility, minister to our culture's isolated mothers, teach biblical parenting, and provide peer support for Jill and other mothers.

I have begun door-to-door introductions. I see this as a way to prepare neighbors to accept subsequent invitations to special events or home Bible study groups. We hope to begin lay-visitation in the future.

We are looking forward to a bright future for this church. We are convinced that God has us here for His good purpose, and we will successfully complete that for which we have been called. It means so much to hear of the support we have from our Brethren around the country. [†]



## The Scoop on Carmel

*What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe — as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.*

I Cor. 3:5, 6; NIV (emphasis added)

**T**HESE WORDS by the Apostle Paul provide a wonderful description of what has taken place at the Carmel Brethren Church over the past twelve months. It seems that I should be able to sit back and point to all of the great

# Carmel Brethren Church: God Made It Grow

By Pastor James Miller

programs and unique ministry opportunities that have caused the growth we experienced during the past year, but I find that impossible. I thought for awhile that it might have been due to the dynamic preaching — but I quickly ruled that out.

People in the Indiana District ask me what I attribute our increases to, and I find myself just shaking my head and shrugging my shoulders, then saying something like, "This is going to sound

trite, but we attribute it to God." That remains my only explanation.

I spoke with an older pastor in the Indianapolis area not long ago, and he was relating to me how his church of about 120 people had planted five other churches in the area. I had no intention of letting this man go until he told me how they did that, what methods they used to achieve it. I stood poised with pen and notebook in hand.

He looked at me rather quizzically, then said, (next page)





*Pastor and Mrs. Jim Miller with their sons Bryan, David, and Luke.*

*(continued from previous page)*

"Well, Jesus said, 'I will build my church.'" And that was it, just an emphasis on being the church that God desired, focusing on what God felt important, and allowing Him to provide the growth. There is something appealing and refreshing in that kind of faith.

Exactly what *has happened* over the last twelve months? Last November our congregation moved into its very first building of its own, an event that provided us instant identity in our neighborhood. A word of thanks needs to be said to Emery Summers of our congregation, who practically completed the interior of the building by himself. What a great example of servanthood!

But interestingly enough, our attendance began to climb a full month before we got into the build-

ing. Even now I can't explain it, except to say that God felt it was time to entrust us with some more people. Our worship attendance has doubled, now averaging in the forties. We have taken in 16 new members since that time, with seven more now awaiting membership. We have baptized six. New people have visited us about every three weeks, and God is answering our prayers for leadership.

Our first vacation Bible school at the building averaged 28 children and drew five families to visit us the following Sunday morning. We now have three Bible studies running, which are reaching more than just our church family, with four outside couples attending these. Eleven of us attended a church prayer retreat in March to

help us focus on a firm foundation for our church. Our worship services are exciting and are geared to reaching the people of our neighborhood. We are praying that we will continue to grow as God sees fit, and that we will be a positive influence for Christ in this community.

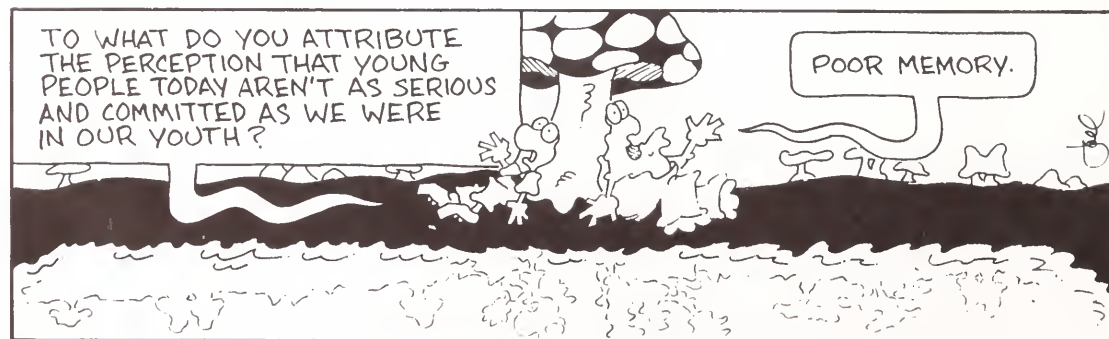
So we've had a year of growth! Not that we haven't experienced some growing pains. But with God's help and our commitment to love and body life, we believe that we can work through these difficulties. Thank you for your prayers. Please continue to lift us up, that we would be faithful to the task and that we would effectively assimilate our new people. We praise God that He has seen fit to "add to our number daily." [†]



*New worship and discipleship facility of the Carmel Brethren Church.*



## Pontius' Puddle



# Brethren Church Ministry Commissions Select Goals for the Coming Year

By Ronald W. Waters, Director of Brethren Church Ministries

**B**RETHREN CHURCH Ministry Commissions met Saturday, September 30, at Park Street Brethren Church in a day of lively and productive discussions. A total of 38 of the potential 40 members were present to conduct the work of the eight commissions. In addition, 17 General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) members and resource persons were present for the day.

Each commission was asked to begin by considering (1) the ideas generated at the GCEC luncheons at General Conference, (2) the purpose of that commission, and (3) the goals the commission would work toward during the coming year. Following is a summary of the purpose of and some of the tasks selected by each commission.

## Leadership Development

**Purpose:** *To seek out and equip persons on behalf of the denomination who are called and gifted for leadership.*

### Goals:

1. Encourage Life Work Recruits (LWR) through a bimonthly mailing; develop prayer warriors for each LWR; encourage local churches to be praying for potential recruits for ministry.
2. Present articles on local church leadership development.
3. Promote the Ashland University Campus Ministry and Seminary recruitment efforts.
4. Review, evaluate, and redefine the Summer Crusader program.
5. Establish short-term ministry opportunities for Brethren of all ages.

## Christian Education

**Purpose:** *To develop Christian commitment through education, discipleship, and nurture for all persons involved in Brethren churches.*

### Goals:

1. Prepare a training initiative for Sunday school teachers of all ages; assist local churches in evaluating curriculum.

2. Encourage adults toward excellence in biblical learning and application of faith in deeds by promoting Walk Through the Bible seminars and providing a retreat on spiritual disciplines in 1990.
3. Inspire Christian formation in youth.
4. Develop a three-year cycle of recommended camp curriculum by 1991; evaluate and recommend children's programs.
5. Strengthen family life through intergenerational experiences.
6. Create a multi-faceted network for Christian education resources by developing a lending library in the National Office.

## Stewardship

**Purpose:** *To provide education and guidance in all areas of biblical stewardship.*

### Goals:

1. Offer articles in the EVANGELIST on stewardship themes.
2. Develop and administer a stewardship survey among our churches.
3. Compile and promote stewardship bulletin inserts, bulletin board ideas, and an annotated bibliography.
4. Present dramatic stewardship features at General Conference.

## Worship

**Purpose:** *To inspire meaningful, appropriate worship of the triune God in public and private.*

### Goals:

1. Prepare conceptual articles on public and private worship.
2. Recommend a book on worship to national auxiliaries.
3. Develop and pilot test a Sunday school class on worship.
4. Teach and model worship for youth at the 1990 National BYC Convention.
5. Offer pastors training in plan-

(continued on next page)



One of the eight commissions — the Leadership Development Commission — hard at work during the commission organizational meeting at General Conference in August. Members of the commission are Phil Lersh (far l.), Tim Eagle (2nd l., back to camera), Bill Shultz (2nd r., back to camera), Lynne Lawson, chair (far r.), and Jenny Williams (behind Lynne). Meeting with them were GCEC representatives Jim Holinger (center) and Virgil Barnhart (behind Tim).



(continued from previous page)

ning effective worship services.

6. Compile recommended guidelines for local church worship committees.

## Evangelism and Church Growth

**Purpose:** To burden, stimulate, and equip Brethren people to share the good news of Jesus Christ through both words and actions in obedience to His word.

### Goals:

1. Continue compiling and distributing lists of Brethren speakers.
2. Complete written presentation of 1989 Conference workshop on visitation.
3. Develop regional opportunities to advance pastors' training in evangelism.
4. Target churches for a consultation service in long-range planning for growth and development.

## Church Relations

**Purpose:** To seek out and develop mutually beneficial associations among Brethren churches and with other denominations of similar size and theology to ours.

### Goals:

1. Host an inter-church luncheon at the 1990 Conference to learn from the experiences of like-minded denominations.
2. Publish a pictorial and factual directory of Brethren churches.
3. Develop a spiritual retreat experience for adults.
4. Promote the work of General Conference and The Brethren Church through national Christian magazines.
5. Encourage publication of historical and doctrinal materials.

## Social Responsibilities

**Purpose:** To stimulate and equip Brethren people to become involved in knowing about and dealing with social issues.

### Goals:

1. Develop a motivational social awareness workshop for us by local churches.
2. Compile a list of social concern resources.
3. Encourage pastors to motivate their people to become aware of social issues.
4. Endorse and promote the CLear-

TV boycott of Mennen and Clorox products because of their sponsorship of television programming that promotes sex, profanity, violence, and anti-Christian bias. (See October *EVANGELIST*, page 10.)

5. Provide articles on opportunities for senior citizens.

## World Relief

**Purpose:** To inform Brethren people of relief needs and stimulate them to involvement through giving and personal action.

### Goals:

1. Communicate World Relief needs throughout the year through the *EVANGELIST* and materials provided by NAE's World Relief Corporation.
2. Gather and distribute ideas for local church fund-raising for World Relief.
3. Encourage local churches to become involved in relief efforts in their local communities through district representatives.
4. Promote involvement in Domestic Disaster Relief and in the Mennonite-sponsored Transcultural Seminar.
5. Promote financial support for World Relief in April annually.

# ABORTION!

A subject that sparks controversy . . . and a subject not directly addressed by the Word of God.

The Social Concerns Committee of General Conference has published ***Abortion: A Study in the Word of God*** to help individuals and groups grapple with this issue, drawing from the whole message of Scripture to seek the will of God.

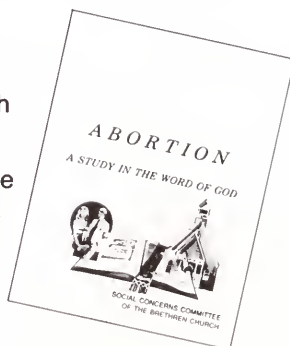
The study is suitable for Sunday school classes, Bible studies, and personal examination. It is divided into two units — A: "Scriptural Principles Related to the Issue," and B: "Scriptural Principles Related to Your Response."

*Order copies for your group today.*

Student Books — 1-9 copies: \$2.00 each  
10 or more copies: \$1.00 each

Teacher's Guide — \$2.50 each or one free  
with order of 10 or more student books.

**Brethren Publishing Company**  
524 College Ave.  
Ashland, OH 44805



## Calling All Churches!

### Calling All Brethren! Adults! Youth! Children!

The World Relief Commission needs your ideas for raising money for World Relief. Brethren are creative folks . . . so brainstorm for ideas and then let's share them with one another.

Ideas will be gathered, printed, and distributed to churches in time for use during our April emphasis on World Relief. The most creative ideas will be printed in the April issue of *THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST*.

### Here is what to do:

1. Write out your ideas — those you have tried and those you have thought of and would like to try. Be sure to include all important details.
2. Include your name and your church's name.
3. Send your ideas to:  
Brethren Church National Offices  
World Relief Commission/Relief Ideas  
524 College Avenue  
Ashland, OH 44805
4. Please send your ideas **no later than January 15.**

## "Our God is an Awesome God" is Theme Of Southern Ind. District WMS Rally

**Mexico, Ind.** — "Our God is an Awesome God" was the theme of the fall rally of the Southern Indiana District WMS, held October 12 at the Mexico Church of the Brethren, with 80 women in attendance.

The morning session of the rally included an organ prelude by Lynne Brady of the Corinth WMS, a welcome and poem by Janie Hattery, vice-president of the Mexico WMS, singing of the theme song (*Awesome God*), devotions led by ladies of the Flora WMS, and a violin solo by Teresa Voorhees.

The speaker for this session was Mrs. Mary Adams, a Christian counselor/therapist from Indianapolis. She spoke on God's plan for our lives and how God brings that plan to pass. Following Mrs. Adams' message, Virginia Balsbaugh of Mexico led the ladies in singing *Footprints of Jesus*, and Dolly Zerbe of Loree concluded the session with prayer.

Lunch was catered by Elma Parker of Loree and served by the ladies of the Mexico Church of the Brethren. A Victorian theme was used in the decorations, with displays of shells and doilies.

The afternoon session opened with

an organ prelude by Lynne Brady followed by singing of the theme song, led by Marian Bargerhuff of Mexico. A memorial service was led by the ladies of the Loree WMS. An article, "Here They Come," was read, and a duet was sung by Dolly Zerbe and Arlene Lewis.

An offering for Ashland Theological Seminary was received by the Corinth ladies, followed by the reading of a poem, "Lord, Speak to Me," and spe-

cial music by a trio from Tiosa.

A business session was then held, led by Janie Hattery. Roll call was taken, with each society answering with a brief summary of its events of the past year. State WMS officers Dolly Zerbe (president), Jane Slag (assistant secretary/treasurer) and Matilda Stout (assistant financial secretary) were introduced; and other business was cared for.

Following the business session, Markie Edwards, co-owner of This & That in Macy, Ind., demonstrated ways to complement an outfit with scarves. Several WMS ladies modeled



*Lunch time at the WMS rally, which was attended by 80 ladies of the Southern Indiana District.*

*Photo by Jennifer Keyes*

## Robert Stafford Ordained to Eldership Sept. 17 at Teegarden Brethren Church

**Walkerton, Ind.** — Robert Stafford was ordained an elder in The Brethren Church at a service held Sunday afternoon, September 17, at the Teegarden First Brethren Church, where Rev. Stafford serves as pastor.

Rev. Gene Eckerley, District Elder for the Indiana District and pastor of the Ardmore Brethren Church of South Bend, brought the message for the service, speaking on the pastor as a watchman. Rev. Stephen Barber, pastor of the County Line Brethren Church, delivered the charge to the pastor. Other Brethren elders participating in the service were Rev. Larry Baker, Rev. Carl Phillips, and Rev. J. Edgar Berkshire.

Mrs. Sherri Visscher, Rev. Stafford's niece from Zeeland, Michigan, ministered in song during the service.

At the conclusion of the service, Elder Stafford and his wife, Sherry,

carried an antique yoke from the sanctuary, signifying their desire to minister to the Teegarden congregation and community and their delight in doing so.

A carry-in dinner preceded the ordination, with many members and friends of the Teegarden congregation attending.

Rev. Stafford is a native of Muskegon, Mich. He is a graduate of Muskegon Business College and St. Paul Bible College. He pastored for several years in the Christian and Missionary Alliance, serving churches in St. Paul, Minn., and Plymouth, Ind. He was ordained by the Christian and Missionary Alliance in 1981. He has pastored the Teegarden First Brethren Church for the past two years.

Robert and Sherry have been married for 18 years. They have two children, Amanda (11) and Thomas (8).

different ways scarves could be tied.

The rally concluded with Janie Hattery introducing and thanking those who helped organize the program, expressing appreciation to those who came, and leading the group in the WMS benediction.

— reported by Jennifer Keyes from minutes taken by Joyce Keyes

## Youth Take Over the Church At Cameron First Brethren

**Cameron, W. Va.** — The Cameron First Brethren youth took over their church on Sunday, September 17.

No, it wasn't a riot or a sit in — it was youth Sunday. Not only did the youth take complete charge of the worship service, including preaching, they also led the Sunday school opening and taught all Sunday School classes.

Those who participated were Chris and Mauna Sampson; Melinda and Betsy Murphy; Brian, David, Michael, and Jessica Gray; Leslie John; Jessica Allison; and Andrew Briggs.

— reported by Dordi John, youth advisor



# Insurance, Finances Among Topics Discussed at Recent GCEC Meeting

Ashland, Ohio — Health insurance for Brethren pastors, progress in denominational restructuring, the 1990 General Conference, and National Office finances were among the topics discussed when the General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) held its first meeting of the new Conference year September 29-30 in Ashland.

The Friday evening session of the two-day meeting was devoted to denominational business and was led by General Conference Moderator Dr. Mary Ellen Drushal. On Saturday, The Brethren Church Ministry Commissions held their first full meetings (see related article on page 17), followed by a GCEC summary session.

During the Friday evening session, GCEC member Dr. Jim Hollinger reported on conversations he had had with representatives of Mennonite Mutual Aid Association (MMAA) of Goshen, Ind., which provides health insurance for a number of Brethren pastors and church employees. These conversations were in response to a General Conference directive to the GCEC that it study health insurance options and make a recommendation

to the Conference.

After hearing Hollinger's report and receiving other input, GCEC concluded that, in spite of communication problems with some policy holders, the group plan with MMAA is very competitive and offers valuable benefits for plan members. (A full report was sent to all pastors and church moderators in early October.)

Director of Brethren Church Ministries (DBCM) Ronald W. Waters reported that the transition in denominational restructuring is progressing smoothly. The Benevolent Board has sold Buckeye Apartments in Ashland to Park Street Brethren Church and has completed legal separation from the Brethren's Home in Flora, Ind., and Brethren Care in Ashland. The Brethren Publishing Company is in the process of setting up the printing department as a separate for-profit corporation with a similar relationship to the company as that of The Carpenter's Shop.

Final merging of Brethren Publishing Company, Board of Christian Education, Benevolent Board, and World Relief Board with The Brethren

Church is scheduled for January 1, 1990.

GCEC also spent time reviewing 1989 Conference evaluations and planning the 1990 Conference. Plans call for Conference to open with three-fold Holy Communion Monday evening, August 6, and conclude with the Moderator's Address Friday morning, August 10. Featured speaker will be Ron Oertli, who developed the Navigator's 2:7 Discipleship Series.

A down side to the meeting was the financial report, which reflected an \$11,500 loss in the National Office account for 1989 through September. The DBCM has forecast expenditures through the end of 1989 in keeping with amounts budgeted, in spite of costs being incurred by the restructuring of denominational ministries.

Unfortunately, the DBCM has also projected income for fiscal year 1989 to fall significantly below budgeted levels, unless unanticipated fair share contributions are received before December 31. He noted that the National Office staff is committed to holding total expenditures to budgeted levels for the fiscal year.

GCEC is next scheduled to meet in Ashland on December 1.

## Sarasota High School Junior Has Sights Set on Missions

Sarasota, Fla. — Kelly Miles, a member of the Sarasota First Brethren Church, though only a junior in high school, already has her sights set on becoming a teacher and missionary.

An article about Kelly and her plans appeared in a recent edition of a Sarasota newspaper, the *Herald Tribune*. An energetic and personable 16-year-old, according to the article, Kelly is a top academic student, with a 3.7 grade-point average at Sarasota Christian School.

A five-year member of Sarasota First Brethren, Kelly credits former pastor Dr. J.D. Hamel and his daughter, Jan (Solomon), with having had an important influence on her decision to choose missionary work.

"Jan is a missionary who took me under her wing when I first joined the church," Kelly says. "We became good friends, and then her father, Pastor Hamel, also became an important influence in my life."

Kelly's plans for missionary service

aren't based on some romanticized ideas about missionary life. She has already had a taste of mission work first hand. During the past two summers she participated in overseas missionary service through Teen Missions International. She served as a teenage missionary in Norway in 1988, and in Jamaica this past summer.

The opportunity to experience mission life and its difficulties first hand hasn't diminished her desire to be a missionary. "Even having to live in some pretty primitive situations, I still felt good about the work I was doing and the people who were helped by my being there," Kelly said.

She admits that she enjoys the luxuries of life and said she would be pleased if her future missionary work would include a nice apartment complete with an air conditioner, a microwave, VCR, washing machine, and dishwasher. But she's also a realist.

"I don't really expect those things. I'll just settle for sanitary living conditions and a clean, comfortable bed," she said.

\*Quotations in this article are taken from the article about Kelly that appeared in the Sarasota Herald Tribune.

## World Relief Providing Aid In S. Carolina and Calif.

Wheaton, Ill. — The World Relief agency of the National Association of Evangelicals has been at work in recent weeks both in South Carolina and in California, giving aid to those affected by Hurricane Hugo or by the California earthquake.

Because of the great demands put on the resources of World Relief by these disasters, Christians are urged to consider making special gifts to World Relief at this time.

Brethren who want to be a part of this disaster relief can channel their gifts through World Relief of The Brethren Church. Checks should be made out to World Relief and sent to the National Office at 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805. Those desiring to designate their gifts may write either Hurricane Hugo Relief or Bay Earthquake Fund on the memo line on their checks.

A thankful heart doubles our blessings, causing us to enjoy them twice — when we receive them, and when we remember them.

A thankful spirit is like sunshine upon the fields.

# Little Crusader



Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

## GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD

Find Matthew 6:9-13 in your Bible and read the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples. Did you ever notice that Jesus doesn't say "I," "me," or "mine" anywhere in this prayer? Instead He says "we," "us," and "our." Jesus wants us to know that when we say He is Lord of our lives, we are no longer alone and can no longer think only of ourselves.

Everything God created was made for ALL of us to share in together. Psalm 24:1 says that everything belongs to God. That means that **nothing** really "belongs" to us. All things are "on loan" from God, "on loan" to ALL of us to share with each other. We can share food, shelter, water, clothes, encouraging words, hugs, smiles, and so much more.

But more than just sharing the "things" that God made, we can share ourselves with others. God created **us** for one another — to love, care for, and watch out for one another.

Way back in the beginning, when God first made people, He said that it was not good for a person to be alone. We need each other. The church is people working **together**, sharing **together**, and loving one another. Each of us is like a piece of a beautiful puzzle. By ourselves we are just one piece, but together we are the beautiful family of God.

### Let's Make a Puzzle!

You will need:



crayons or colored markers  
scissors  
cardboard  
clear Contact paper  
permanent marker  
construction paper

1. Draw a picture of your church family or Sunday school class on construction paper.
2. Glue a piece of cardboard of the same size to the back of your picture. (You can cut up an empty cereal box for cardboard.)
3. Let dry, then cover both sides with clear Contact paper.
4. Use a permanent marker to draw on the back of the picture how you will cut it into pieces. Then cut out the pieces.

### Things to Share!

Hidden in the letters below are things we can share with others.

C O F O O D A H U G S  
M E D I C I N E U M C  
L O V E S M I L E S L  
K I N D L O M T O G O  
W O R D S W A T E R T  
H O M E S R L O S M H  
K E S H O E S Y W A E  
K N O W L E D G E O S

love	food	smiles
homes	water	toy
clothes	shoes	medicine
knowledge	hugs	kind words

Did you find them all? What else can we share with others?

### Family Worship

Ask each person in your family to collect **three things** for which he or she is thankful. (It can be the thing itself or a picture of the thing. It can also be a person.) Sit in a circle on the floor or at a table. Then take turns thanking God for the things you have collected and lay the thing or the picture of it in the center of the circle. As you pray, remember to Whom these things really belong and that He gave them "on loan" to you.



## More Than 150 Expected to Attend Denominational Planning Retreat

**Ashland, Ohio** — The Denominational Planning Retreat planned for the end of November has been well-received by Brethren Church pastors and lay leaders.

Reservations received through October 20 totaled over 150 for the meeting, to be held at a retreat center near Vermilion, Ohio.

The primary purpose of the retreat is to develop a five-year plan for The Brethren Church. A secondary goal is to help church pastors and local lay leaders learn to lead their congregations in producing a five-year plan based on the model used at the retreat.

Invited to take part in the retreat

were every pastor of a Brethren church, a lay leader from each congregation, selected denominational executives, and members of the General Conference Executive Council. Moderator Mary Ellen Drushal will lead the seminar.

All costs for housing and meals for the retreat are being provided by generous contributions from several Brethren individuals and churches and by a grant from The Brethren Church Foundation.

Brethren Church members are asked to be in prayer for this retreat, as their leaders seek to discern God's direction for the future ministry of The Brethren Church.

## November 19-26 to be Observed As National Bible Week in U.S.

**New York, N.Y.** — National Bible Week will be celebrated from November 19 to 26 in small towns and big cities all across America.

This will be the 49th annual observance of National Bible Week, which is sponsored by the Laymen's National Bible Association. It was first observed in 1941, just as America be-

came active in World War II.

The purpose of this observance is to uphold the place of the Bible in American life and to encourage people to read the Bible. Past observances have served to persuade as many as eight million people (according to a Gallup Survey) to become regular Bible readers, most for the first time.

You can be a part of National Bible Week by reading the Bible yourself and by encouraging your family and friends to read and study the Bible.

### President George Bush's Proclamation of National Bible Week

Try to imagine Western civilization without the Bible. It can't be done. The writings of Dante and Tolstoi, the art of Michelangelo and Chagall, the music of Mendelssohn and Bach, the Gothic cathedrals — these and so many of the great works of Western culture are filled with the words, images, and spirit of the Bible.

Above all, our moral tradition can be traced to the ideas found on its pages. Over the centuries, the teachings of the Bible have challenged and inspired our great philosophers and have shaped our laws and customs. They have also provided inspiration for countless men and women who look to the Bible for guidance in their daily lives. As the Psalmist says, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."

Nowhere is this more true than in our own Nation. The United States was founded upon the ideas of freedom, justice, equality, and democracy — ideas rooted in the biblically supported belief that every human being is made in our Creator's image and is deserving of respect and dignity.

This year we celebrate the bicentennial of the inauguration of our first President, George Washington. President Washington was keenly aware of our Nation's reliance on Divine Providence and of the Bible's unique role as a matchless guide in human affairs. To the oath of office prescribed by the Constitution, he added the words "so help me God" and then kissed the Bible upon which his hand had rested. In every Presidential inauguration since, the Bible has played a simple yet powerful role, serving as a symbol of eternal truths from which our ideals of liberty and justice are derived.

Every year since 1941, the Laymen's National Bible Association has sponsored National Bible Week as a time to renew interest in the Bible and to recognize its place in the hearts of Americans, as well as in American life and culture. The 49th annual observance will begin November 19, 1989, with the theme, "To Know Where You're Going — Read the Bible." In communities across the United States, events will be held to celebrate the Bible, and I urge all Americans to participate.

To understand where we have been, to appreciate our history and culture, the Bible is indispensable. To discern where we are going and how we should get there, the Bible offers us a timeless source of wisdom, hope, and inspiration.

## Cameron Brethren Church Hosts Pa. District WMS Fall Rally

**Cameron, W. Va.** — Eighty-two WMS ladies, laymen, and pastors attended the Pennsylvania District WMS Fall Rally held September 30 at the Cameron First Brethren Church.

Ocie Hooks of Brush Valley, with a little help from Chester McAfoose of Sarver, brought devotions during the morning WMS session. Their comments focused on the importance of prayer and the need to make Jesus Lord of one's life — which was the theme of the rally.

During the business session, conducted by District WMS President Charlotte Howard, September 29, 1990, was set as the date and Vinco as the place for next year's rally. Scholarship money for students at Lost Creek, Ky., was chosen as next year's project.

The Vinco II society was in charge of receiving project moneys for this year's project; \$1,050.50 was received and will go to the Missionary Board's Missionary Kids' Scholarship Fund.

Helen McAfoose presented the devotions for the afternoon meeting. The highlight of this session was an uplifting song service by Judy Majesky, an active member and musician in the Highland Brethren Church. Ms. Majesky attends the Greater Pittsburgh Guild for the Blind, where she studies vocational and daily living skills. The host minister, Pastor Ralph John, ended the session and the rally with the concluding benediction.

— From the Pennsylvania District Newsletter as reported by Marsha Nulph.

## Publishing Co. Print Shop Is Now The Brethren Printing Company

**Ashland, Ohio** — The Print Shop of the Brethren Publishing Company became a separate company on November 1, called the Brethren Printing Company.

This development is a part of the reorganization taking place at the denominational level. The new for-profit company is wholly owned by the Brethren Publishing Company, and ownership will be transferred to The Brethren Church, Inc., when the Publishing Company merges with the church in January.

The Brethren Printing Company, managed by Robert Allen, will continue to print the EVANGELIST as well as do printing for The Brethren Church and its ministries, Brethren congregations, and Ashland area customers.

From  
The



Grape  
Vine

The Milledgeville, Ill., Brethren Church observed September 17 as Friends Day. For several Sundays prior to the event, Pastor Kenneth Sullivan preached on various aspects of friendship, and members of the congregation prayed for and invited friends to attend the September 17th service. As a result, a capacity crowd was in attendance on Friends Day.

The First Brethren Church of Warsaw, Ind., dedicated new hymnals and choir robes on Sunday evening, October 8, with a service of celebration, thanksgiving, and worship.

Youth of the Cameron, W. Va., First Brethren Church have begun a "Mother's Day Out" service, through which the youth offer baby-sitting services to young mothers of the congregation. The youth have had two "Days Out" so far, and are planning more during the Christmas shopping season. (See page 19 for an article

about the recent youth Sunday of the Cameron BYC.)

Pastors of the Pennsylvania District met October 23 in Berlin, Pa., as the guests of Rev. and Mrs. Ralph Mills for a day of fellowship and encouragement. Under the leadership of District President Carl Yoder, the pastors shared present concerns and hopes for the future. Pastors' wives also met and, under the leadership of Grace Radcliff, shared their hopes and concerns.

The Pittsburgh, Pa., Brethren Church has become actively involved in the abortion issue. Every Saturday morning, members of the congregation join Christians from several area churches in a legal, peaceful protest at Magee Women's Hospital, a facility that allegedly performs over 1,000 abortions per year. The protesters carry signs on the sidewalks surrounding the hospital in a quiet, orderly protest. Because Pittsburgh is an abortion center for western Pennsylvania, the Pittsburgh Church invites Brethren from western Pennsylvania to join them in these Saturday protests.

A Pennsylvania District Youth Rally will be held November 17-18 at the Sarver Brethren Church. Scheduled events include a missions challenge by Brethren missionaries Tim and Jan Solomon, a talent show, recreation, a business meeting, and a

youth challenge by National BYC Moderator Mark Ray.

\* \* \* \* \*

Evangelist Billy Graham received the 1,900th star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame — the first clergyman to be so honored for a preaching ministry through radio — in a special ceremony held October 15 in front of Mann's Chinese Theatre on Hollywood Boulevard, sponsored by the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce. "I doubt that there is anyone in Hollywood who has been seen, heard or enjoyed by more people than Billy Graham," said Johnny Grant, Honorary Mayor of Hollywood and chairman of the Walk of Fame Committee, who served as master of ceremonies. "So, today we welcome Billy Graham to Hollywood with our love, our respect and a prime location on the Walk of Fame."

Good news from China — after just 21 months of operation, the Amity Printing Company in Nanjing, China, printed its one millionth Chinese Bible on September 28. The printing of this number of Bibles in such a short time is a phenomenal accomplishment and one that will provide well over one million people unprecedented access to the word of God. The Amity Printing Company is a joint venture established by the United Bible Societies and the Amity Foundation, a social service organization initiated by Chinese Christians.

## In Memory

**Minnie Delcamp**, 88, October 17. Member for 68 years of the Pleasant Hill First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Robert Westfall.

**Harvey D. Hinz**, 84, October 13. Member for approximately 50 years of the Falls City First Brethren Church, which he served as choir director, Sunday school teacher and superintendent. Services by Pastor Curt Nies.

**Leslie R. Dodds**, 85, October 1. Member since 1913 of the Falls City First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Curt Nies.

**Nell Ingle**, 94, October 1. Member for many years of the Pleasant Hill First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Robert Westfall.

**Daniel Seibert**, 67, September 29. Member for five years of the St. James Brethren Church, where he sang in the adult choir, men's quartet, and Senior Citizen's choir. Memorial service by Pastor Brian H. Moore.

**Grace Knight**, 95, September 21. Member of The Brethren Church of New Lebanon. Services by Pastor Robert Dillard.

**Zechariah Robert** and **Jacob Lowell Michael**, infant sons of Mr. and Mrs. Phil-

lip Michael, who died shortly after birth on September 18. Their parents are members of the Lanark First Brethren Church. Graveside services by Pastor Thomas Schiefer.

**Mrs. Della Walker**, 93, September 10. Member for 80 years of the Louisville First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor John Brownsberger.

**Glenn Miller**, 70, July 31. Member for 60 years of the Louisville First Brethren Church, which he served as treasurer for a number of years.

**Lillian Wallace**, 97, April 25. Member for many years of the Pleasant Hill First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Robert Westfall.

## Weddings

**Lydia Keck Hoover** to **Russell Stahly**, October 8, in Teegarden, Ind.; Pastor Robert Stafford officiating. Bride a member of the Teegarden First Brethren Church.

**Susan Ann Sawyer** to **Michael Evans**, October 8, at Morris' Chapel, University of the Pacific, Stockton, Calif.; Rev. Roger Stogsdill, pastor of the Lathrop Brethren Church, officiating. Members of the Lathrop Brethren Church.

**Vickey Sanders** to **Douglas Stogsdill**, October 6, at the Loree Brethren parsonage. Pastor Claude Stogsdill, father of the groom, officiating. Groom a member of the Warsaw First Brethren Church.

**Pam Weichers** to **Ross Todd**, September 30, at the Waterloo First Brethren Church. Pastor Lynn Mercer officiating. Bride a member of the Waterloo First Brethren Church.

## Goldenaires

**Eddie and Bessie Lippold**, 65th, November 27. Members of the Loree Brethren Church.

**Paul and Arlene Lewis**, 50th, November 12. Members of the Loree Brethren Church.

**Vern and Viva Dietz**, 55th, November 8. Members of the Waterloo First Brethren Church.

**Robert and Lorraine Haugh**, 50th, November 4. Members of the Milledgeville Brethren Church.

## Membership Growth

**New Lebanon**: 7 by baptism  
**Pleasant View**: 5 by baptism, 1 by transfer





As you read the pages of this issue of the EVANGELIST, you will be able to see what is taking place in and get "THE SCOOP" on some of our Home Mission Churches. We want to thank you for your faithful support of the Brethren Home Mission Program through your regular and special gifts, Growth Partners, and the Revolving Loan Fund. If other "SCOOPS" are to be added to our Home Mission Program, it will be because you continue with that support during 1990.

*Please Give  
Generously*

*through your local church,  
or mail your gift to:*

**MISSIONARY BOARD  
OF THE BRETHREN CHURCH**  
524 COLLEGE AVE.  
ASHLAND, OHIO 44805



BRETHREN HISTORICAL LIBRARY  
MANCHESTER COLLEGE  
NORTH MANCHESTER, IN 46962

Funderburg Library  
MANCHESTER COLLEGE  
North Manchester, IN 46962

# THE BRETHREN Evangelist

DECEMBER 1989







# the salt shaker

by Alvin Shifflett

## The Massacre at Bethlehem

**D**ID the infant massacre at Bethlehem actually happen? Is it history or myth?

Except for the virgin birth itself, no aspect of the Christmas story has come under heavier criticism than the slaughter of the innocents at Bethlehem. Many ancient secular and church historians, biographers of Herod the Great, and critical scholars have called the incident into question.

### Emotional objection

Paul L. Maier in his book, *First Christmas* (Harper, 1971), claims that much of the objection to the infant massacre part of the Christmas story may be emotionally based. In the midst of joy comes an unwelcome note, a sour note of the butchery of babies. Scripture does not seek to spare the feelings of its readers.

Another objection to the baby slaughter at Bethlehem is ethical. Why would a good God allow such an atrocity to take place? This objection overlooks the entire Christian premise — that this same good God allowed His Son to be crucified.

But there are also the scholarly and historical objections. Is the Matthew account history, allegory, or myth? Many historical writers of Herod the Great deny that he ever ordered the slaughter of infants. Only one, Stewart Perowne, states that Herod's ordering the slaughter is "wholly in keeping with all that we know of him" (*Life and Times of Herod the Great*).

Many writers, arguing from silence, say that the massacre is legend, since Josephus, the great Jewish historian of the first century, doesn't mention it. One might indeed ask why this great historian didn't record this mass murder. Didn't he know about it? Perhaps not. On the other hand, it may only be a case of not reporting everything — only the most horrendous events.

We all know that the media are biased in their reporting. They report only what they want the public to know.

Why should we think that Josephus was any different? If he knew of the incident, he must have decided it wasn't worth reporting. As horrible as it seems, the killing of the innocents pales in comparison to other events in Herod's blood-stained reign of terror. No one was safe from this insane man.

What? Not report the ghastly slaughter of hundreds of babies? But this is exactly where most people make a mistake. It was not hundreds. Based on the population of Bethlehem at the time, it was, at the most, 15-20 children — if that many.

### Poor translations

Matthew's "holocaust" (Matt. 2:16) has suffered from poor translations. For example, the rendition, "in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof," in the King James Version gives a wrong impression. The word translated "coasts" implies borders or boundaries, not extensive territory.

Today we'd say that the slaughter took place in "Bethlehem proper," or possibly in "Bethlehem and its suburbs." The latter would be stretching it, since Bethlehem was too small to have suburbs.

Bethlehem had, at the most, only about 2,000 inhabitants at the time. Even without the "pill," they couldn't have had more than three or four dozen children under two, only half of whom would have been boys. Hollywood has ballooned our imagination.

### More grisly things to report

Josephus, born a half century later, might possibly have never heard of this small — and politically hushed — event. And even if he did, he had far more grisly things to report — like Herod's deathbed order that when he died, leaders from all parts of the country were to be locked inside the great hippodrome at Jericho and massacred by roasting. This would assure universal mourning at his death.\* Otherwise, people would be dancing in the streets.

Josephus, writing for a sophisticated Greco-Roman audience, understood the economics of the hour. He knew what would sell. The loss of a dozen or so infant sons of Jewish peasants in far away Bethlehem had no appeal or significance in Rome.

The world hasn't changed much today. And neither have the reporters. [†]

*\*The order was never carried out.*

# THE BRETHREN Evangelist

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## Season's Greetings:

*May the Light that came into the world as a tiny Baby shine brightly into your life this Christmas season, bringing you peace and blessings. And may your life so reflect that Light to others around you that they, too, may experience the true Joy of Christmas.*

*Richard C. Winfield, Editor*

Cover photo: Harold M. Lambert Studios, Inc.

## Answers to Little Crusader Page:

No answers needed this month. We hope that you enjoy making a nativity scene and thinking about the *real* meaning of Christmas.





# Elizabeth's Diary

by Susan Hyland

*"We often forget that Jesus' birth was not the only miraculous one relating to "Christmas." Though not the Son of God, the other special child was the prophet who would prepare His way. And he would give his life as well. And so we remember his birth, and Elizabeth, the one who bore him.*

"BARREN!" After all these years I would think that that word would have lost its power to hurt me. But there it was. Judith stopped by to show me her new grandchild, all pink and tiny cuddled in her arms. Then she said, "A pity you were barren."

Pity is something I've tried to keep out of my life. "Barrenness of womb need not mean barrenness of spirit," I have always told myself. Yet when Judith left, I wept. Tears washed over these wrinkled old hands, which should be caressing grandchildren by now but which still ache to hold their firstborn.

When I was young, I cherished a secret dream that I would be like one of the great mothers in the ancient scriptures, whose barrenness the Lord removed to give her a special child. "My son will be another Isaac or Samuel or Samson," I thought. But now the dream is just a distant memory.

Well, old woman, enough of feeling sorry for yourself. Time to get back to work.

\* \* \* \* \*

I feel so restless today. Zechariah left this morning for Jerusalem, where he will be taking his turn at Temple duty. He was so excited. He could hardly wait to leave, his eyes shining in anticipation. This year he was chosen to burn incense at the holy altar, an honor every priest hopes to receive. After all these years, fulfillment in his old age.

Where is my fulfillment? Something seems to be missing from my life. It's not

just a child; there's more to it than that. I want to serve the Lord, too, in some special way. If I were a man, I would be a priest — my family line going back to the great High Priest, Aaron. But I'm a woman. And the world tells me that my duty is to bear children. What can I do without a child to make my life complete?

\* \* \* \* \*

Zechariah returned from Jerusalem yesterday, and I just don't know what to think. He can't speak. I'm afraid the excitement of the Temple was too much for him at his age, and yet . . . . He tries so hard to tell me something, acting out strange scenes and making signs with his hands. The message is about angels and visions and a child we will have. His poor old mind is so confused, and yet . . . . What if he isn't crazy? What if he really has received a word from the Lord? It's silly to even think that, of course. The prophets have been dead for three centuries and more. Why would God speak to a simple old man? And yet . . . .

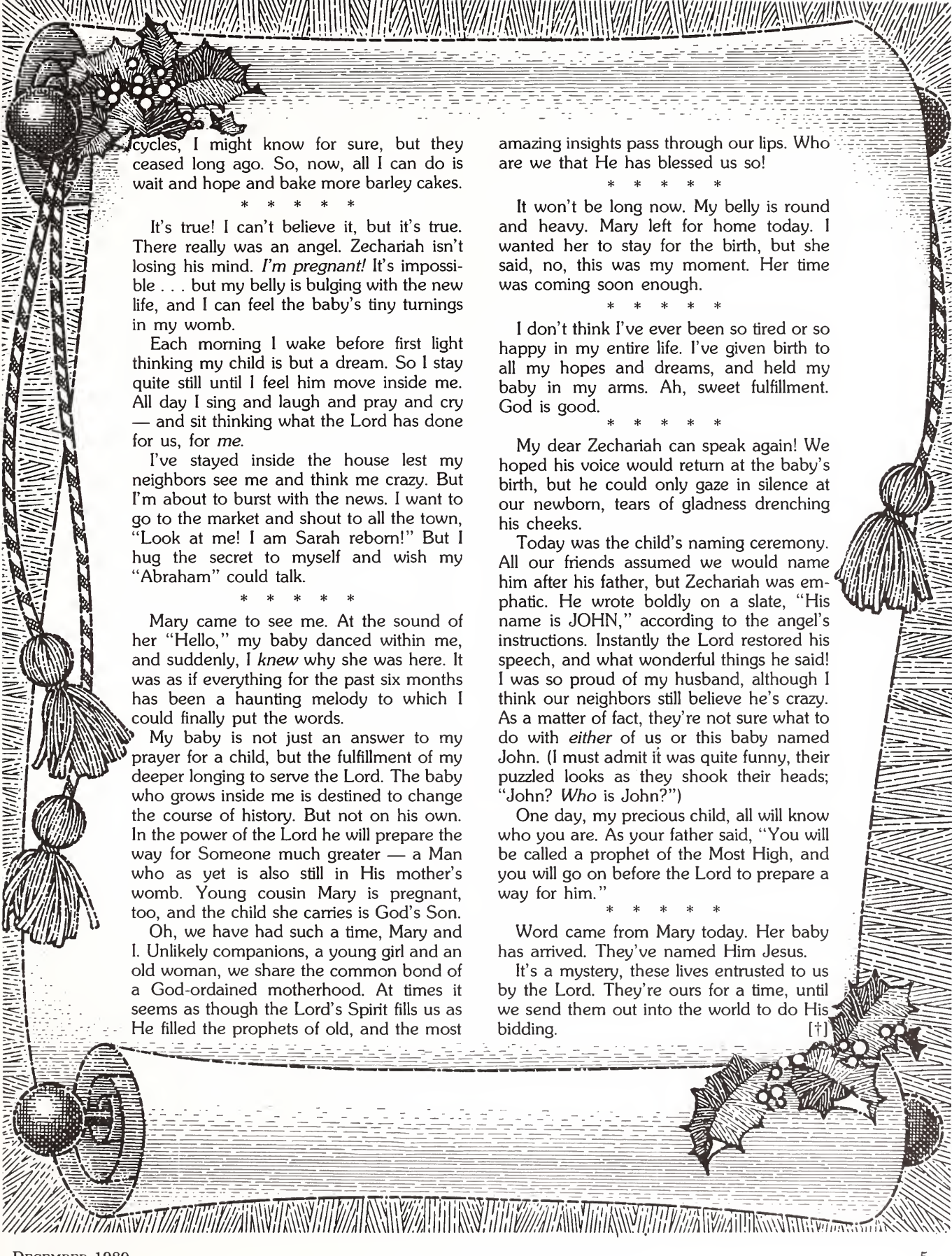
\* \* \* \* \*

I haven't felt well these past days. My stomach won't let me eat anything but barley cakes. It must be old age creeping up that tires me so, along with the worry I've had about Zechariah. But this morning, all of a sudden the thought came to me, "Maybe I'm with child." I know it's impossible, but I can't seem to shake the notion from my mind.

What if an angel really did promise Zechariah a son? If I still had my monthly

*Mrs. Hyland, a member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, is a graduate of Ashland Theological Seminary and is working on her Ph. D. degree in biblical studies from Fuller Theological Seminary. She, her husband Kenneth, and their two children currently live in Ashland.*





cycles, I might know for sure, but they ceased long ago. So, now, all I can do is wait and hope and bake more barley cakes.

\* \* \* \* \*

It's true! I can't believe it, but it's true. There really was an angel. Zechariah isn't losing his mind. *I'm pregnant!* It's impossible . . . but my belly is bulging with the new life, and I can feel the baby's tiny turnings in my womb.

Each morning I wake before first light thinking my child is but a dream. So I stay quite still until I feel him move inside me. All day I sing and laugh and pray and cry — and sit thinking what the Lord has done for us, for *me*.

I've stayed inside the house lest my neighbors see me and think me crazy. But I'm about to burst with the news. I want to go to the market and shout to all the town, "Look at me! I am Sarah reborn!" But I hug the secret to myself and wish my "Abraham" could talk.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mary came to see me. At the sound of her "Hello," my baby danced within me, and suddenly, I *knew* why she was here. It was as if everything for the past six months has been a haunting melody to which I could finally put the words.

My baby is not just an answer to my prayer for a child, but the fulfillment of my deeper longing to serve the Lord. The baby who grows inside me is destined to change the course of history. But not on his own. In the power of the Lord he will prepare the way for Someone much greater — a Man who as yet is also still in His mother's womb. Young cousin Mary is pregnant, too, and the child she carries is God's Son.

Oh, we have had such a time, Mary and I. Unlikely companions, a young girl and an old woman, we share the common bond of a God-ordained motherhood. At times it seems as though the Lord's Spirit fills us as He filled the prophets of old, and the most

amazing insights pass through our lips. Who are we that He has blessed us so!

\* \* \* \* \*

It won't be long now. My belly is round and heavy. Mary left for home today. I wanted her to stay for the birth, but she said, no, this was my moment. Her time was coming soon enough.

\* \* \* \* \*

I don't think I've ever been so tired or so happy in my entire life. I've given birth to all my hopes and dreams, and held my baby in my arms. Ah, sweet fulfillment. God is good.

\* \* \* \* \*

My dear Zechariah can speak again! We hoped his voice would return at the baby's birth, but he could only gaze in silence at our newborn, tears of gladness drenching his cheeks.

Today was the child's naming ceremony. All our friends assumed we would name him after his father, but Zechariah was emphatic. He wrote boldly on a slate, "His name is JOHN," according to the angel's instructions. Instantly the Lord restored his speech, and what wonderful things he said! I was so proud of my husband, although I think our neighbors still believe he's crazy. As a matter of fact, they're not sure what to do with *either* of us or this baby named John. (I must admit it was quite funny, their puzzled looks as they shook their heads; "John? *Who* is John?")

One day, my precious child, all will know who you are. As your father said, "You will be called a prophet of the Most High, and you will go on before the Lord to prepare a way for him."

\* \* \* \* \*

Word came from Mary today. Her baby has arrived. They've named Him Jesus.

It's a mystery, these lives entrusted to us by the Lord. They're ours for a time, until we send them out into the world to do His bidding.

[†]



# Colombia Was My Comfort Zone

By Janet Solomon

**"IT'S JIM BLACK on the phone!"** Tim shouted. "The Missionary Board is pulling us out of Colombia!" With these words, our lives changed instantly.

So much needed to be done — paperwork, packing, even being fingerprinted. Leaving a foreign country can seem almost more difficult than entering it. But the Colombian government was concerned to see that all foreigners seeking to leave the country got out safely. Extra flights were provided and Colombian passengers were even "bumped" to make room for the increasing number of fleeing foreigners.

Life has always been a little unsafe in Colombia. During our stay there we developed a variety of safety measures designed to give us low visibility while still enabling us to function. But such measures were no longer good enough.

The situation became critical with the murder of front-running presidential candidate Dr. Carlos Galan, who was running largely on an anti-drug campaign. The place where he was assassinated was less than ten minutes from where we lived. His death sparked such headlines in the Bogotá newspapers as "The Mafia Killed Galan" and "O God, Save Us!"

With Galan's death, war broke out between the government and the drug lords. Life in Bogotá progressed from living with the reality of occasional gunfire to coping with the threat of bombings and other terrorist attacks. When the war esca-



*Lisa Solomon (r.) says goodbye to her best friend, Angela, and to Angela's mother before leaving Colombia.*

lated to the point that the Mafia threatened to kill Americans if the drug lords were extradited, the Missionary Board decided to pull our family and the Kerner family temporarily out of the country. Missionaries from many other mission agencies left as well.

At the time, we wished we could stay in the country. People were coming to the Lord. We had just finished a major crusade with Argentine evangelist Dr. Luis Palau. Many of our youth had sung in the choir during the week-long event, and I had the privilege of playing flute in the crusade orchestra. More than 10,000 first-time decisions were made during the crusade, and the event broke stadium records for attendance. Except for the presence of the Colombian army, it would have been easy to forget that all this was taking place in the middle of a war zone.

I guess that explains in part why we were so hesitant to leave Colombia. This country had become our home, our "comfort zone." Now, however, we appreciate the wisdom of the board's decision, when we realize that, according to the *Tampa*

*Tribune*, more than 225 bombs exploded during the first two months of this war.

While we were still in the country, however, we had grown accustomed to life there, even to the conflict going on around us. In fact, when we returned to the U.S., we were shocked at the materialism and the shallowness we found in our own land.

This has caused me to ponder. What is your "comfort zone"? How used to your atmosphere have you become? Bombs may not be exploding near your home, but is your environment any healthier than ours was? In Colombia we discovered very quickly that humans can adapt quite easily to just about anything — even war. Let us never grow accustomed to the sin around us.

In our travels to Brethren churches since our return, various women have asked me, "How were you able to leave everything in Colombia, your furniture, your belongings, and your friends, not knowing if you would ever be able to return?"

At each church I have given the same answer: "Sometimes we Americans have an image about our lives, that things will go a certain way and that life will throw us no curves. But the truth is, we must put our trust firmly in God because we all live in an imperfect world where life is tough and in which things don't always go as they should.

You may never be evacuated from a foreign country, but your life could also be changed by just one phone call. You may hear that a loved one has been killed in a car accident, or that a family member has cancer, or that a school friend is using drugs.

No matter what may occur in our lives, it is my hope that in every circumstance we will be able to place our lives complete in the hand of the Lord and that together we may be able to affirm with one accord that "My comfort zone is Christ!" [†]

---

*Mrs. Solomon and her husband, Tim, are Brethren missionaries to Bogotá, Colombia. Because of the drug war there, they were pulled out of Bogotá on September 7, 1989.*

*At its November '14 meeting, the Missionary Board agreed to permit the Solomons and the David Kerner family to return to Colombia. (See page 11.)*

# An Open Letter to the Brethren

**My brothers and sisters in Christ,**

I write to you out of love and concern for The Brethren Church and our part in spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ. As our world continues to grow in numbers, the number of those who are separated from our Lord increases as well. That makes the task of spreading the gospel even larger and more necessary.

As millions remain separated from the knowledge of Jesus Christ, our task can seem impossible. But it is not. We can proclaim with the Apostle Paul, "I can do all things **through Christ**, who gives me strength."

Our Lord gave us a good dose of strength and encouragement on Thursday evening of General Conference, as nearly 60 young men and women answered His call to enter the service of Christ full time. These "Life Work Recruits" are men and women who have felt the Lord's call to service as pastors and missionaries in The Brethren Church and who have said "Yes" to that call. Praise the Lord for open hearts and willing spirits!

As a result of this commitment on the part of these men and women, I have a favor to ask of you. Pray for those who have given their lives for full-time service. Pray that they will continue to follow the Lord's leading. Pray for ways that **you** can be used to aid these people in their preparation. Pray for our district and national mission boards as they look for opportunities to place these "recruits" in ministry. And pray for more laborers!

Yes, the task is large. But it is not impossible! We must begin somewhere, and I believe that the "somewhere" is on our knees praying for these brothers and sisters who have committed themselves to service for the Lord. So following this letter is a list of the names of those who came forward Thursday night of Conference to become "Life Work Recruits." Please make sure that everyone in your congregation has access to this list. Your pastor should already have a copy. But why not see that copies are given to the ladies of your WMS, the men of your Men With a Mission, and the youth of your BYC? Post copies on bulletin boards; print the names in newsletters; and above all else, remember these people in your prayers.

Jesus said, "The harvest is plentiful, but laborers are few. **Pray** to the Lord of that harvest, that **He** would send laborers into **His** harvest fields" (Matt. 9:38). May our prayers, lifted up as one voice to the Lord of the harvest, serve the Lord and The Brethren Church well, as we seek to be His servants in a lost world.

Jesus Is Alive! Because He Lives,  
James F. Black

*Rev. Black is pastor of the Gretna Brethren Church near Bellefontaine, Ohio. He presented the message, "A Call For Laborers," during the Thursday evening service of General Conference.\* Below are the names (and home churches) of those who*

*answered the call to full-time Christian service following that message. The letter above and these names are being shared with the Brethren at the request of the Leadership Commission of The Brethren Church.*

Eric Bargerhuff, Mexico  
Jerry Barr, Sarver  
Glenn Black, Park Street  
Sherri Bowman, Maurertown  
Becky Brooke, Cov. Com.  
Jennifer Cole, Newark  
Anna Cooksey, Park Street  
Carma Cummins, Bryan  
Troy Cummins, Bryan  
Tim DeLaughter, N. Man.  
Luana DeWinkler, Mulvane  
Amber Dolby, N. Manchester  
Lynn Ellis, Oakville  
Shawn Epling, Tampa T & C

Alyson Finks, Park Street  
Allison Fruitt, N. Manchester  
Christi Gaston, Dutchtown  
Chad Geaslen, Fremont  
Michelle Geaslen, Fremont  
Paul Gentle, Park Street  
Ashley Grassia, Sarasota  
Brian Gray, Cameron  
Brent Grimm, Milford  
Gretta Gross, Warsaw  
Jenny Harmon, Milledgeville  
Sarah Hollewell, Lanark  
Annalee Hoover, N. George.  
John Howenstine, Trinity

Rich Hubble, Lathrop  
Brian Jack, Sarver  
Andrea Jones, N. Manchester  
Tiffany Jones, N. Manchester  
Aaron Kepple, Sarver  
Rebecca Logan, Bethlehem  
Tom Martin, Newark  
Lysa Messenger, Sarasota  
Stacy Olige, W. Alexandria  
Molly Orebaugh, Oakville  
Tonya Peugh, Milledgeville  
Tony Price, New Lebanon  
Alissa Rager, N. Manchester  
Mark Ray, Milford

Carl Rensberger, Warsaw  
Brian Riggatire, Sarver  
Karen Robins, Tucson  
Ashley Shomo, Tucson  
Megan Shultz, Park Street  
Paul Sluss, Roanoke  
Kara Smith, Mulvane  
Matthew Snell, N. Man.  
Kurt Stout, Burlington  
Erica Voorhees, Mexico  
Kim Wagoner, Elkhart  
Yvette Weller, Sarasota  
Kimberley Wilkins, Tucson  
Robert Wilson, NW. Chapel  
Elaine Wood, Huntington

*\*Rev. Black's message was printed in the November EVANGELIST.*



# "Give Me This Mountain"

By Ronald W. Waters

**T**HE YEAR is 1969. It is a typical July evening — hot and muggy, one of those summer nights when it's impossible to sleep. But on this night, no one cares about sleeping.

It is just before 11:00 p.m. If you drive up and down the streets of any American town on this night, you'll see the blue glow of television sets in every living room. People are huddled around the set, not watching the eleven o'clock news, but watching news in the making!

On an insignificant moon in the vast universe, a solitary individual, dressed in an aluminum foil-like spacesuit, ventures off the pad of a comical looking structure of metal, and proclaims, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." And for the first time in the history of the world, a human being sets foot on another planet in God's universe.

Do you remember the feeling, the sense of pride, the experience of near disbelief, the feeling of uncertainty as we saw Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin walking on the moon?

The dream of traveling to the moon had occupied the thoughts of many through the ages. But it **happened** in our lifetime.

Some had said, "It can't be done. I'll believe it when I see it." Others, however, did not hear those words. They did not know that it couldn't be done. So they set about the task, and they did it that hot July night in 1969.

Now imagine yourself in another

situation: You are camped in a wilderness, at the edge of an oasis. You are a member of the nation of Israel, one of three million people who for nearly two years have been moving across the desert toward a land promised to your forebears. You've come from slavery in Egypt, where you did forced labor.

God had intervened. By ten plagues He had subdued the Egyptians, and the Pharaoh released you to the leadership of Moses. You've made this journey across the wilderness and are on the edge of the Promised Land.

The Lord says to Moses, "Send some people to explore the land which I am giving to the Israelites. Send one of the leaders from each of the twelve family groups. See whether the people are strong or weak, few or many. And the land — see if it is good or bad. Study the towns — see if they are unwalled or fortified. And bring back some of the fruit" (Num. 13:2, 18-20).

You are chosen to go. You will spend 40 days carefully exploring the land. But what will you see?

## A report of the expedition

Numbers 13-14 records the results of that expedition. After 40 days of spying out the land, you return to give your report. The lookouts see you coming and report your approach to Moses. News spreads like wildfire throughout the camp. Anticipation is high; people are on tip-toe to see your little group returning. There you are in the midst of the returning party, carrying one end of a pole over your shoulder. Hanging from that pole is a single cluster of grapes — a cluster so large it takes two of you to carry it.

Moses and Aaron greet you on your arrival, and the people gather to hear your report. A hush falls over the masses as the people wait to hear your words.

You and the others give your report. "We went into the land, and it is a land that flows with milk and honey!" You and your partner hold up the huge cluster of grapes and say, "Here is some fruit of the land!" The people go wild with excitement! What a change this will be from the hardships of the desert.

But now comes the critical time — the time for both a majority and a minority opinion. Ten of the spies quiet the enthusiasm and excitement of the people. "But the people who live there are powerful. Their cities are fortified. All the people we saw are of great size. We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them" (Num. 13:28, 33).

The people weep aloud bitterly, "If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this desert!"

But two of the twelve give a different report. Caleb, the 40-year-old representative from the tribe of Judah, silences the people. "We should go up and take possession of the land. We can certainly do it."

Then, joined by Joshua, he proclaims, "The land we explored is exceedingly good. If the Lord is pleased with us, He will lead us into that land flowing with milk and honey, and He will give it to us. Don't be afraid of the people of the land, because we will swallow them up. Their protection is gone, but the Lord is with us. Don't be afraid of them" (Num. 13:30, 14:7-9).

But the people rebel. They aban-

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*Rev. Waters is Director of Brethren Church Ministries. This article was originally presented as a message at General Conference in August.*

***"We need to look into the face and the mind of the God of the impossible and realize, 'You've got to believe it before you can see it.'"***

don Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Caleb, and are ready to stone them. But at this point the glory of the Lord appears in the tabernacle. Moses intercedes for the people. Yet the Lord declares that all will die without seeing the Promised Land — all except Caleb and Joshua.

Caleb is singled out by the Lord: "Because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it" (Num. 14:24).

And that's exactly what happened! For 40 years the Israelites wandered almost within grasp of the land of promise, yet unable to enter it until all who were adults had died.

**Show me and I'll believe it**

They call the state of Missouri the "Show Me" state — show me and I'll believe it. That may seem like a very practical approach to life. "Show-me-first" people are not confined to the borders of Missouri, however; you'll find them in every state of the USA. And you'll find them among us Brethren as well. Perhaps you too have said at one time or another, "I've got to see it before I'll believe it."

But that's the most negative, impossibility-thinking idea that has ever come along. It is not a God-given statement, and I hope you will purge it from your vocabulary!

Ten of the twelve spies wrapped their whole life around that one statement — "I've got to see it before I'll believe it." They'd spent 40 days exploring this magnificent land. But somehow they could only see the huge people and the heavily-fortified cities that would be difficult to overtake with an army, let alone by common people unaccustomed to warfare. And they said, "We can't do it."

Now they were right. *They* couldn't do it.

Caleb and Joshua literally "saw" the same things as the other spies. But they were seeing with different

eyes. They could see the possibilities, they trusted the God behind the possibilities, and they expected a different outcome — victory — because of their faith.

"You've got to *believe* it before you can *see* it."

The writer of Hebrews summed it up well: "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and being certain of what we do not see. This is what those great people from our past were commended for" (Heb. 11:1-2). In chronicling the great Old Testament people of faith, he comments, "The [one] who approaches God must have faith in two things, first that God exists and secondly that it is worth [one's] while to try to find God" (Heb. 11:6, *Phillips*).

"You've got to believe it before you can see it."

That's exactly what you and I have had to do to receive our salvation. We cannot see God; we cannot see our eternal reward. But we have believed it before we see it. We're going on the strength of a promise — "whoever comes to me, I will in no wise cast out." And we look forward to that great day when God's plan for our world will be consummated, when Jesus will have the supremacy over all. But we "have to believe it before we can see it."

**Everyday examples**

It happens every day in our lives. We turn the key in the ignition of our car because we believe it will start when we do so. We plug the razor or curling iron into the electrical outlet, not because we see the electricity, but because we believe it is there. And because we "are certain of what we do not see," we turn the thing on and it works.

"You've got to believe it before you can see it."

It happens in our church life. Sometimes we say, "It can't be done," or "That could never happen," or "So-and-so will never change. I've got to see it before I'll believe it."

Those are negative-thinking state-

ments, lack of faith statements, impossibility statements. They are the kind of statements that should never be thought or spoken by children of a Father who is the God of the impossible.

Rather, we need to look above the circumstances of life — above the giant people, the fortified cities, the seemingly hopeless and helpless situations. We need to look into the face and the mind of the God of the impossible and realize, "You've got to believe it before you can see it."

**Caleb's reward**

What was the end for Caleb? After the Israelites were finally allowed to enter the Promised Land 40 years later, and after five years of conquest of the land, Caleb asked Joshua for the rugged hill country around Hebron as his possession. The descendants of Anak, those "giants in the land" who 45 years earlier had been so frightening to the ten spies, were still living in that area. Yet 85-year-old Caleb said, "Give me this mountain . . . the Lord helping me, I will drive them out just as He said" (Josh. 14:12).

Caleb was a person who could believe it before he could see it. Even at age 85, he said he was "just as vigorous to go out to battle now as I was then," 45 years before. "Give me this mountain."

So Joshua — his spiritual leader — blessed him and gave him his desire. This was perhaps the most challenging assignment in the conquest of the land. Yet Caleb believed these strong men could be overthrown, and he was ready to prove it as the Lord was with him.

Joshua 15:14 gives the results. Caleb drove them out. Truly the Lord instilled within those sons of Anak a God-given fear of this 85-year-old man and his motley band.

"You've got to believe it before you can see it."

For years I've heard the doom-sayers say, "The Brethren Church is dying; The Brethren Church is



***"For years I've heard the doom-sayers say, 'The Brethren Church is dying; The Brethren Church is dead.' But the church of Jesus Christ never dies, because He is Lord."***

dead." But the church of Jesus Christ never dies, because He is Lord. And if He is Lord, He is Lord of our future. He gives no guarantee to organizations, but His church, which is His body, will never die! We must live up to the possibilities He has called us to. We need to believe it before we can see it.

I believe we stand on the threshold of something new and exciting in The Brethren Church. It's not because of something any of us has done. It's because Jesus Christ is Lord, the Lord of our future.

I believe the work God will be doing among us will not be centered on what is happening at 524 College Avenue, Ashland, Ohio. What we do in the National Offices must encourage and enhance that work of God which will be accomplished through our local churches.

### **The nature of this new work**

I believe God wills to do a new work among us as Brethren in nurturing one another to become mature, authentic disciples of Jesus Christ . . . and in the process, to be reaching new people for Jesus Christ and discipling them, too.

Now you may say that this is not a new thing at all — that this has been the mission of the church from the time of Christ. And I say, YES, it has been! But I believe that God wills it to become the life and breath of our churches, every one of our churches, from this day forward until the day He comes again to claim us ultimately as His own!

I believe He wants to accomplish great things in outreach through us — to reach a growing number of new people with the Good News of Jesus Christ. I believe it because His word commands it — there is no question about it, and we have no choice!

I believe God wants us to be starting new outposts in this country, planting new churches, starting new mission works overseas, and expanding those we already have.

I believe God wants us to be calling and equipping men and women

for ministry — pastoral ministry, mission work, lay leaders in our congregations with vision and vigor for the task before us.

### **Called to a wartime mentality**

I believe God is calling us, not to a reduplicating of our efforts, but to a wartime mentality, to a commitment to defeat a clear, well-defined enemy.

I'm too young to remember the Second World War; but I am enough a student of history to know that this country rallied to a wartime strategy during those years. Our people were willing to sacrifice their time, their creature comforts, their loved ones, even their own lives.

But after the war, we settled into a "cold war" mentality — we had no clearly defined enemy to rally us together, or at least not one that was perceived to be a true threat to our lives and well-being. So today as a nation we have become very lax, very self-centered, very affluent, and very selfish in that affluence.

I'm afraid we as a church have fallen into that same kind of "cold war" mentality. We know we have an enemy out there, and we know he is active in our world. But we act like we have him tamed on a leash; he's not such a threat. But because of that attitude, people are dying daily without Jesus Christ.

I was moved when David Loi stood before our Conference with tears in his eyes as he talked about his people. We even commented about his concern for his people. But where are our tears for our people? Where are our tears for the people God would have us be reaching?

The enemy is active, and we must move into a wartime strategy that says we are willing to give everything to the One who is Lord — to work against the forces of Satan working in our lives, in our churches, and in our communities. We must see him as a real threat. We must commit ourselves and all our resources for doing constant battle with him until that great day

when Jesus Christ shall indeed be King of kings and Lord of lords.

I believe we are on the threshold of something great — not for any glory for us, not for The Brethren Church, but to accomplish His will in our world and to become authentic disciples.

Lyle Schaller has said that a church must begin to act like what it wants to become before it reaches that point. That's another way of saying, "You have to believe it before you can see it."

### **What will we choose?**

We have a choice, just as the Israelites did that day standing on the threshold of the Promised Land. We may choose to dwell in the warm glow of our memory of a past that is more glorious in our minds than it was in reality. We may choose to remain in the present state of complacency, where life is comfortable because it is familiar. Or we may choose to move boldly into a future fraught with uncertainties, but filled with the promise of the all-powerful, all-loving, and totally-just God of the universe.

"You've got to believe it before you can see it."

If we are to accomplish great things for God, as individuals and as a church, we must follow his guidance and believe that it can be done — believe it before we make the attempt, before we "see" any activity. Caleb said, "Give me this mountain . . . the Lord helping me, I will drive them out just as He said."

What is the mountain in your life? What is the mountain in your church? What is the mountain at this time in the life of The Brethren Church?

If you believe it, you'll see it . . . and it will amaze you what dreams He will unfold in your imagination. It will amaze you even more when He causes those very dreams to come to pass in our lives individually and as the church of Jesus Christ — who is Lord of our Past, our Present, and our Future. [†]

# Missionaries Return to Colombia

By James R. Black, Executive Director  
Missionary Board of the Brethren Church

**A**FTER a great deal of prayer and deliberation, the Executive Committee of the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church decided on November 14 to return our missionaries to Colombia to complete their tours.

The decision followed many weeks of anxiously observing the situation in Colombia. Our missionaries remained in regular contact with Brethren staff in Medellín and Bogotá, and their counsel was valuable to us. In addition, I kept in telephone contact with Dr. Wade Coggins, Executive Director of E.F.M.A. (Evangelical Foreign Missions Association) and Mr. Bob Klamer of C.P.C. (Contingency Preparation Consultants). These organizations were in close contact with other mission agencies and with U.S. State Department personnel.

It became "apparent" that the narcotic cartels were not targeting North Americans as was first thought to be true, and so it was thought that missionaries could return if safeguards were in place.

In August of this year we were all in a state of near panic when we were advised that events in Colombia created a situation of greatly increased risk to missionaries and their families. The killing of a number of judges, media people, and others opposed to the increase of drug activity had prompted many officials to desire to increase efforts to curtail cartel activities.

When front-running presidential candidate Carlos Galan was brutally and publicly assassinated, "war" broke out. It was the escalation of this war, along with threats against North Americans as a result of the extradition of cartel leaders, that required the immediate decision to evacuate our missionary families.

In addition to the above, the fact that both the Kerner and Solomon

families were first-term missionaries had to be considered.

David and Diane Kerner and their children, along with Bill and Trudy Kerner who were visiting in Medellín, arrived home on Saturday, September 2. The day following their departure, the Medellín airport was closed due to a shooting incident. Therefore Tim and Jan Solomon were contacted in Bogotá and advised to leave. The Solomon family arrived in the United States on Thursday, September 7.

The missionaries will return as soon as possible to resume their work and complete their current assignments.\* It was essential that they return within 90 days of their departure or their resident visas would expire. They are to return to the U.S. for their regularly scheduled furloughs, and at that time a decision will be made as to the future of Brethren mission activity in Colombia. Their involvement in Colombia will be "low profile," and the Solomons will move to an apartment complex where greater security is provided (as the Kerners have already done).

Please remember that the decision to return the missionaries does not mean that "all is well in Colombia." Only a sense of call and commitment require their return. Faithfully pray for them and for the Colombian people and leaders. Pray for all missionary people who feel their presence in Colombia to be in the will and purpose of God.

It must certainly be true that Christ founded His Church upon the Great Commission as its charter of incorporation. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and [disciple] all nations . . . and, lo, I am with you

\*Since this article was written, both the Kerners and the Solomons have returned to Colombia.



always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:18-20). "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). "... repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations . . ." (Luke 24:47). "... as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21).

I believe our missionaries, as did the Apostle Paul, view missions not as a charity, a benevolence, a mere occupation, but as a calling to be answered, an obligation to be discharged, a debt to be paid. And we thank you all, wherever you are, or may in the future be. [†]

## Missionaries to Return to the United States

While two families have recently returned to the mission field, another Brethren missionary couple — Bill and Sharon Winter, who serve in Argentina — will soon be returning to the United States. The Winters are scheduled to depart for the U.S. on December 17.

Thankfully, the Winters' return is not because of political uncertainties, but is their regularly scheduled furlough. They will arrive home in time not only to spend Christmas with their family, but also to celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary (25 years on December 26th).

While on furlough, Bill hopes to continue work toward a masters degree at Fuller Theological Seminary. Any plans for deputation are uncertain at this time and will be announced later by the Missionary Board.

Be much in prayer that Bill and Sharon will have a safe return and a restful and beneficial furlough.



## What's Happening to the Board of Christian Education?

The Board of Christian Education (BCE) is in a period of transition. The BCE is one of our cooperating boards of General Conference that is in the process of merging into the Brethren Church National Office.

Since former Director Charles G. Beekley completed his service with the BCE in May, Administrative Assistant Debra Ritchey has served a broader role in overseeing the traditional ministries of the Board of Christian Education. Deb ably directed the 1989 Summer Crusader Program and the National BYC Convention at North Manchester. In August, Ronald W. Waters, Director of Brethren Church Ministries, was assigned oversight of Christian education responsibilities with Deb's assistance through the transition.

The actual members of the Board of Christian Education completed their supervision of the Christian education ministry at General Conference. The officers of the board continue to handle legal matters related to the transition.

Beginning with General Conference, two new commissions elected by General Conference are overseeing the BCE's traditional ministries. The Leadership Development Commission is giving input into the 1990 Summer Crusader program and is involved in an evaluation and review of this ministry. The new Christian Education Commission is guiding the more traditional Christian education concerns, including camping, discipleship, Sunday schools, teacher training, and youth ministry.

The merger of all legal entities will be completed on January 1, 1990. After that the existing Board of Christian Education of The Brethren Church, Inc., will cease to function. All ministry and staff of the BCE will become part of the Brethren Church National Office.

Through December 31, 1989, all correspondence related to the ministries of the Board of Christian Education should be directed to the BCE. After January 1, please direct your calls and letters to the Brethren Church National Office. Both are at 524 College Avenue, Ashland, OH 44805; phone 419-289-1708.



## A Brief History of the Board of Christian Education

**T**HE BOARD of Christian Education was created on August 17, 1966, by General Conference with the following purpose:

To exalt Christ and to make disciples through the promotion of a total program of Christian Education, holding fast to the great doctrines of the scriptures with an awareness of the heritage of The Brethren Church.

Following are milestones in the history of the BCE:

- 1966—Bev Summy hired as first employee<sup>1</sup> (as Administrative Assistant to the Board). Manual of Christian Education developed.
- 1967—Fred Burkey hired as the first Director of Christian Education.
- 1968—"Snow Ball," holiday retreat for older high school and college age youth, held in late December in eastern Pennsylvania.<sup>2</sup>
- 1969—First meeting of the National BYC Council.
- 1970—Summer Crusader program reinstated. Youth Leader's Guide available.
- 1971—LEROY introduced (Leadership Course, Evaluation, Read a book from an approved listing, Observe another leadership situation, Yearly conference [attend at least one]).

Collegiate Crusaders started.

- 1974—Presentation of ICL semi-

<sup>1</sup>Other staff included: Richard Blacksten, Fred Finks, Bob Fowler, Ron Waters, Marcia Stoffer, Sherry Van Duyne, Mark Baker, Norma Waters, Julie Schiefer, Jean Troup, Deb Ritchey, Mitch Funkhouser, Kimberly Carman and Jenny Williams.

<sup>2</sup>Other Retreats have included: Camp Friedenswald in Michigan, 1969; St. Petersburg, 1970; Springmill State Park, Indiana, 1971; Post-high winter trip to Florida, 1987; and Post-high winter retreat at Camp Mack, 1989.



*Former Directors of Christian Education Fred Burkey (above, as he looked then) and Charles Beekley (below).*



- nars at General Conference.
- 1975—*The Brethren: Growth in Life and Thought* published.
- 1977—Association of Brethren Church Teachers formed, with seminars and a newsletter started in the fall.
- 1978—Distributed a discipleship manual.
- 1979—Charles Beekley hired as the second Director of Christian Education.
- 1980—Discipleship pamphlets developed.
- 1983—*A Teaching Resource on Brethren History* published with Kerry (cont. next page)

**bce**

# The Christian Education Commission: Plans and Objectives

**ONE CHALLENGE** the national Board of Christian Education has faced is its distance from where the action takes place.

Discipleship happens in local churches, as local people are led by local leaders to become more like Christ and, thus, authentic disciples. A national board or commission of Christian education is one step removed from that local process.

The purpose of a national Christian education organization, therefore, must focus on:

- nudging/encouraging local congregations to take seriously the task of discipling their members;
- providing resources to assist in the process;
- discerning whether spiritual growth is taking place across the denomination as a result.

Recognizing that discipling happens through the local church, the Christian Education Commission at its September 30 meeting established six goals (outlined briefly in the November issue of *THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST*, p. 17) and plans for reaching those goals. Following are the commission's plans for the coming year — and beyond.

*(continued from previous page)*

Scott, Tim Garner, Alberta Holsinger, and Richard Allison serving as writers.

1984—Central District provides funds towards purchasing a vehicle for the Summer Crusader program.

1987—The Foundation Series (Sunday school curriculum) first offered to the denomination.

The Board of Christian Education incorporated.

1990—The Board of Christian Education merges into The Brethren Church, Inc.

## Purpose:

To develop Christian commitment through education, discipleship, and nurture for all persons involved in Brethren churches.

## Goals and Objectives:

1. Improve the quality of the Sunday school program in The Brethren Church.

A. Develop a teacher training initiative by General Conference 1990, with an outline by the March meeting, including:

1. self-evaluation;
2. materials, films, videos;
3. recommended reading;
4. resource sessions, other than Brethren;
5. resource people.

B. Redistribute the curriculum evaluation tool for use in selection of materials through curriculum order packets in the spring and fall quarters.

C. By 1990 address alternative approaches to discipleship.

2. Encourage adults in all aspects for excellence in biblical learning and application of faith and deeds.

A. Promote Walk Through the Bible Seminars across regions and annually increase attendance.

B. Provide one spiritual discipline experience in retreat form in 1990.

C. In 1990 address life-cycle development for adults.

3. Inspire Christian formation in youth.

A. Publish and distribute BYC guidelines for growth, for example, spiritual, outreach, fellowship, and educating youth advisors.

B. Encourage the implementation of the BYC guidelines on a local and district level.

C. Develop a multimedia learning presentation for youth on Brethren history and doctrine.

D. Sponsor an inspirational mid-year retreat in 1989 (scheduled December 27-29 at Camp Mack in Indiana).

E. Plan, implement, and evaluate 1990 National BYC Convention.

F. Use *The Morning Star* as a communique for youth, leaders, and pastors.

4. Nurture and educate children from birth with a variety of Christian learning experiences.

A. Develop a three-year cycle of camp curriculum by 1991.

B. Research and evaluate children's club programs; possibly have a display at General Conference 1990.

C. Provide guidelines for day camp programs in local churches in 1992.

5. Strengthen family life through intergenerational experiences.

6. Create a multifaceted network for Christian Education resources.

A. Investigate video resources on hand and develop a lending library.

B. Participate in IdeaSheet resources.

The Christian Education Commission welcomes your suggestions. Contact Debra Ritchey in the National Office (524 College Avenue, Ashland, OH 44805; phone 419-289-1708) or one of the commission members:

Rev. Kerry Scott, Chair

219-533-1121

Mrs. Linda Barr 412-353-2768

Mr. Glenn Black 419-289-0370

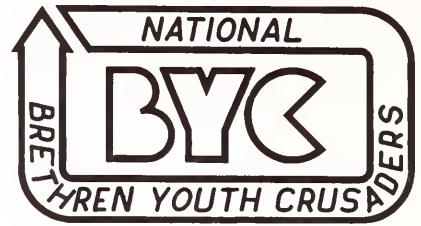
Mrs. Jane Solomon 219-262-4740

Mr. Ken Van Duyne 419-281-4891

Dr. Mary Ellen Drushal, GCEC  
Liaison 419-289-5170



# Brethren Youth: "Being a Friend"



**B**EING A FRIEND is what Brethren Youth are aiming for during the 1990 BYC year. The BYC Council held its fall meeting at Camp Bethany and came up with some exciting plans for the future. And due to the merger of the Board of Christian Education with The Brethren Church, a new task force has been formed.

The Youth Task Force consists of two members from the Christian Education Commission and the current national youth officers. This group has already met and expanded on plans suggested by the National BYC Council. "Operation Focus" was developed and is being piloted with churches in

northern Ohio. Each officer on the task force is contacting a few churches about district and national BYC and sharing suggestions for their local youth groups.

Our Moderator, Mark Ray, is also busy visiting as many district rallies as his schedule permits. He has already attended rallies in Indiana and Pennsylvania and will attend the Arizona rally in late December.

A Post-High Winter Retreat is being planned for December 27-29, 1989, at Camp Mack near Milford, Indiana. This retreat is open to youth, juniors and seniors in high school through age 22. Terry Voorhees will be the speaker.

The 1990 National BYC Convention will emphasize worship, sharing, and growth. As our theme indicates, we are trying to develop a stronger bond of friendship among Brethren youth across the country as well as in our relationship with Jesus Christ. The BYC Convention will be held in conjunction with the adult General Conference, August 6-10, 1990, on the Ashland University campus.

The 1991 BYC Convention is just in the planning stages. In 1991, the BYC will celebrate forty-five years of existence. A retreat-type weekend is being examined as an alternative to the current BYC Convention structure. [†]

## 1990 Summer Crusader Program: Exploring New Opportunities

**A**S THE SUMMER of 1990 approaches, new ideas for the Crusader program are being developed.

### District Crusaders

We are broadening our program to include youth, sophomores

through seniors in high school, ages 15-18, to serve for a two-week period within their own district. A team of four to six youth, supervised by an adult coordinator or intern, will serve at elementary camp and a week of VBS (or two weeks of VBS). This opens up op-

portunities for service to youth in high school and helps to familiarize them with the Summer Crusader program. This program will be pilot-tested in one district in the summer of 1990.

### Summer Crusaders

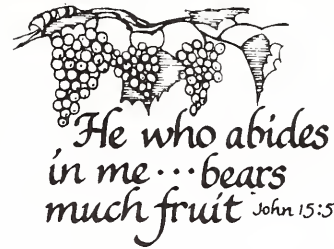
Youth, graduating high school seniors through age 22, are the target group for the 1990 Summer Crusaders. We hope to develop four different types of teams:

- **Camp** (which will work specifically with camp programming and activities)
- **Children's** (available for VBS, Bible learning activities, worship services)
- **Drama/Youth** (will teach a Bible study for junior high, senior high, and post-high youth as well as lead youth (cont. next page)



*The 1989 Ed. Team (l. to r. Tony Price, Paul Sluss, Kim Wilkins, Brent Grimm, and Alyson Finks) led the Milford, Ind., VBS on a "Son Seekers Safari."*

# Be Authentic Disciples



The statement above is more than a one-year General Conference theme; it is to be a way of life for people who have pledged their faith in Jesus Christ as saving Lord.

Discipleship (becoming more and more like Christ Himself) is what Jesus expects of all His followers. Helping in that task has been the goal of the Board of Christian Education for more than 23 years.

With the transition taking place in the National Offices, your financial support this month is especially needed. The ministry of Brethren Christian education does not end December 31! It will only take a different form. Your contributions this month will assure a strong, ongoing ministry of Christian education in The Brethren Church.

Thank you for your financial support through the years . . . and especially this month through your local church or directly to:

**Board of Christian Education**  
524 College Avenue  
Ashland, OH 44805

## Summer Crusaders

*(continued from previous page)*

activities; present worship service using drama as the main theme; lead a session involving the family with drama, devotions, music; nursing home services; limited surveying)

— **Music/Youth** (will present a musical in a worshipful setting; lead a junior high, senior high, and post-high Bible study as well as lead youth activities;

nursing home programs; lead a session for the family on music, devotions, worship; limited surveying)

## Crusader Interns

Internships are now available for ages 20 and up (college youth, seminary students, young career adults). We have expanded the list to include: Camp, Christian Education, Music, Youth, Pastoral, and Foreign Missionary Internships.

Internships are arranged between the prospective Intern, the hosting church, and The Brethren Church National Office.

In 1991, we hope to expand our District Crusader program across the denomination as well as add a few more team choices to our Summer Crusaders. Other ministry opportunities in addition to the Crusader Program are being explored and will be announced as information is available. [†]



## Pontius' Puddle





## Mexico, Indiana, First Brethren Church Celebrates 100th Anniversary October 29th

**Mexico, Ind.** — On October 29, members and friends of the First Brethren Church of Mexico celebrated the 100th anniversary of the congregation.

Dr. Jerry Flora, professor of New Testament theology at Ashland Theological Seminary, delivered the sermon for the morning centennial service. He used the work of John the Baptist, Jesus, and Mother Teresa to illustrate the principle that in the worst possible time and the worst possible place, the least likely servant can do the greatest work.

Congregational singing for the worship service was led by Mrs. Kay Voorhees and Mrs. Marion Bargerhuff, accompanied by Mrs. Julie Flora on the piano and Mrs. Delores Hattery on the organ. Special music was presented by Mrs. Peggy (Zook) Nutt, who sang "We will Serve Him," accompanied by Miss Julia Lamb. The service was led by Pastor Richard C. Voorhees and was attended by approximately 100 people, many of whom came dressed in the fashion of the Brethren of the 1890's.

A carry-in dinner was held at noon, with a bountiful meal being enjoyed at tables decorated with Indian corn, bittersweet, gourds, and candles. A display corner of pictures, programs, and copies of the *EVANGELIST* dating back



*Members, former members, and friends of the Mexico First Brethren Church getting organized for a group picture.*

Photo by Julie Flora.

to the 1910's, a history of the congregation, an old hymnal, and other memorabilia was enjoyed by those in attendance. After the meal, a group picture was taken on the front steps of the church building.

At 1:30 p.m. a second service of celebration and recognition was held, with Dr. Flora again the speaker. Using the question, "What Do You Have in Your Hand?" as his topic, he spoke on how people who appeared to

have little talent early in life later became active and well-known in Christian work.

Others participating in the service included Timothy Nutt, who played a piano prelude; Mrs. Voorhees, who again led congregational singing; Eric Bargerhuff, an Ashland University student and member of the congregation, who sang two special numbers; and Pastor Voorhees, who led the service.

During the service former pastors and longtime members of the congregation were introduced and given special recognition. Former ministers in attendance were Rev. Arthur Tinkel (1940-41); Rev. (and Mrs.) Wayne Swihart (1951-56); and Rev. (and Mrs.) Austin Gable (1976). Also in attendance was Mrs. Edna Hood, deaconess in 1939 when the church celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Those who had been members 40 or more years were introduced and presented with certificates. Those present were Don Fisher, member 64 years; Charles Balsbaugh, member 59 years and also a deacon; Mildred Shafer, 53 years; Joyce Keyes, 50 years; Virginia Balsbaugh, 42 years and also a deaconess; and Delores Hattery, 42 years. Those absent but mentioned were Ruth Chapin, member for 82 years; Viola Nutt, 67 years; and Ethel Mae Keyes, 47 years.

The Mexico First

(next page)



*Mexico members dressed in the style of earlier Brethren are (front row, l. to r.) Blaine Keyes, Janie, Dean, and Troy Hattery, (back row, l. to r.) Jennifer and Joyce Keyes, Virginia Balsbaugh, Judy Mongosa, Pastor Richard Voorhees, and (at r., looking on) Barry Riggs (front) and Cy Bargerhuff.*

Photo by Karen Mooreland.

# Missions Emphasis Month Observed At Winding Waters Brethren Church

**Elkhart, Ind.** — The Winding Waters Brethren Church of Elkhart celebrated its year round commitment to missions by observing September as Missions Emphasis Month.

The kick-off event for the celebration was called "Meet Our Lifesavers." Rev. James R. Black, Executive Director of the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church, brought an informative address during each of the two morning worship services on this kick-off Sunday.

These services were followed by a carry-in dinner, during which several local and area "Lifesavers" who receive support from the Winding Waters Church were honored. This time of fellowship provided an opportunity for members of the congregation to talk personally with the people serving in these ministries, and to receive prayer reminders to take home for use in their personal devotions.

The local missions represented included *Assist*, a support program for abused spouses; *Susannah's Kitchen*, a ministry that provides meals for the poor and homeless; *Sarah's House*, a home for pregnant women; *Church Community Services*, a ministry that provides food, finances, and other support for the poor; *Jail Chaplaincy Program*, a strategy of evangelism and discipleship for prison inmates in Elkhart County; and *Basic Adult Education*, an adult literacy program that educates people and enables them to find jobs to support themselves and their families. Also recognized at the

dinner was Connie Soellinger of Campus Crusade for Christ, who serves at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo.

Representatives of several of these ministries returned on subsequent Sundays during the month to speak to the congregation in detail about their work.

News from foreign mission works supported by the church was also shared during the month, including work in Colombia, India, Singapore, New Zealand, and China. A Sunday

morning message by Mr. and Mrs. Mark Logan, former Brethren missionaries to Colombia, was well received.

The success of the Missions Emphasis Month will only be revealed in the future giving, mission involvement, and prayers for missions of the congregation. Nevertheless, one positive indicator was the nearly \$1,200 given in an "over and above" love offering for the Brethren orphanage in India during the month.

The Winding Waters Church currently gives eleven percent of its total budget to missions. The goal of the congregation is to increase this percentage each year.

— reported by Carol M. Pawlak,  
church secretary



Local "Lifesavers" and other mission workers honored during Missions Emphasis Month at Winding Waters included (l. to r.) Sue Wargon (of *Susannah's Kitchen*), Elizabeth Yoder (*Assist*), Mike Kupke (*Jail Chaplaincy*), Mary Jane Carpenter (*Church Community Services*), Rev. James Black (*Brethren Home and World Missions*), Sister Virginia Micelli (*Basic Adult Education*), Connie Soellinger (*Campus Crusade*), and Roxana Konopinski (*Sarah's House*).

## Mexico Centennial

(continued from previous page)

Brethren Church came into existence as a result of a revival meeting held by Evangelist S.H. Bashor early in 1889. The church was formed on March 10 of that year, with 17 charter members. Soon afterward the congregation divided into two branches, resulting in the formation of the Corinth Brethren Church.

In 1891 the Mexico branch purchased land, and on September 21 construction of a church building was begun. This was completed in May 1892 at a cost of \$2,500, and the building was dedicated on May 29 with Dr. J. Allen Miller of Ashland presenting the dedicatory address.

Elder W.C. Perry was the first salaried pastor, and served from July

1891 to October 1892. Sunday school was organized in June 1892, and a Missionary Society was formed in October of that same year. Other early pastors were Levi W. Ditch (1892-97), followed by the powerful evangelist Dr. L.S. Bauman (1897-1900), during whose three-year ministry 70 members were added to the congregation.

During its early years, the Mexico congregation grew rapidly. The church was also instrumental in starting two other congregations. In 1910, a new church was formed in Denver, Indiana, to which approximately 50 members of the Mexico Church transferred their membership. Then in 1914, a church was formed at Peru, Indiana, resulting again in a transfer of several members.

In 1924 the church building was en-

larged. Five classrooms were constructed, a new outside entrance was added, the basement was extended, and a baptistry constructed, all for a cost of \$6,000. A parsonage was purchased in 1927, sold in 1941, and another purchased in 1957. The church building has been painted and redecorated at various times throughout the years, and carpet was installed in the sanctuary and classrooms in 1972.

During its 100-year history the Mexico congregation has been served by 33 pastors and had a total of approximately 650 members. Pastor Voorhees has served the church since 1984, and membership at the end of 1988 was 38.

— reported by Jennifer Keyes,  
corresponding secretary



## Loree Brethren Church Dedicates Heating/Cooling System and Lift

**Bunkerhill, Ind.** — The Loree Brethren Church dedicated several improvements to the church facility on October 8, including two new furnaces, three air conditioners, and a lift for the handicapped.

The two new high-efficiency furnaces replace units that were aging and of low efficiency. The decision to add cooling units to the furnaces was made during the heat of this past summer.

Both the furnaces and the cooling units are controlled by computerized thermostats that can be programmed so that the building is automatically heated or cooled whenever it will be occupied.

Air conditioning was installed not only to make morning worship services more comfortable during the heat of summer, but also to make it possible to continue Sunday evening serv-

ices throughout the summer months. (In the past, evening services have been discontinued during hot months of the year.) The air conditioned building will also provide a more comfortable setting for vacation Bible school.

The lift was installed to make the church building more accessible to the elderly and the handicapped. The elevator-like lift can be entered at ground level and taken either up to the sanctuary level or down to the basement level. It has a 500-pound capacity.

The lift, called a "Pro Lift" and made by Special Elevator Devices of Plymouth, Mich., was installed in a shaft built by the men of the church. Cost of the lift itself was \$12,000, with total cost including installation coming to \$15,000.

— reported by Doris Deisch  
and Pastor Claude Stogsdill



Photo by Jack Gable.

*Winifred Miller steps out of the lift on the sanctuary level. A corner of the church library was taken to house the lift on this floor.*

## Plate Glass Windows and Ventilators Dedicated at Linwood Brethren Church

**Linwood, Md.** — New plate glass windows and ventilators to protect and preserve the church's stained glass windows were dedicated during the November 19 morning worship service at the Linwood Brethren Church.

Pastor Robert Keplinger brought the message for the service and led the litany of dedication. Special music was presented by Joan Myers, Dee Keplinger, Wayne Lowman, the Children and Youth Choir, and the Senior Choir.

The windows and ventilators were installed by the Ehrhart Stained Glass Company of York, Pa. According to Financial Secretary Virginia Hook, the project cost \$14,000 and was dedicated debt-free. Support came through the giving of members, memorials to loved ones, and the generosity of neighbors and friends. A plaque listing the names of all donors was unveiled during the dedication service.

Following the dedication service, a light lunch was served by the Woman's Missionary Society and a video from World Relief was shown. An offering was also taken for World Relief, so that the congregation, as it rejoiced in its blessings, might share those blessings with others.

According to Pastor Keplinger, this dedication Sunday "was truly a great day. [We] had a full church and a good spirit."

He also noted that the congregation is not resting on its accomplishments. On dedication Sunday members were given an opportunity to list on their bulletin inserts what they think the church needs to do next. The top two

things listed were redecorate the sanctuary and trim the trees and shrubs on the church property. Other significant listings were to get more young people and to get their house in order physically and spiritually.

## Mystery Guest Makes Visit For Friends Day at Muncie

**Muncie, Ind.** — Sunday, November 5, was "Friends Day" at the Muncie First Brethren Church.

Everyone was encouraged to bring a friend to the worship service on that Sunday. Rev. Keith Bennett, pastor of the congregation, promised, in turn, that he would bring a special friend to the service — a "Mystery Guest."

Pastor Bennett went to great effort to "sneak" this Mystery Guest into town, conceal him in the parsonage, then hide him in the pastor's office until time for introductions. When that time came, the congregation learned that the Mystery Guest was not one person but two — former pastor Rev. W. St. Clair Benshoff and his

wife, Polly. Though they were guests, the talented couple was nevertheless pressed into service during the worship hour — playing the organ and piano.

Following worship, everyone went to the fellowship hall for a delicious chili dinner, sponsored by the W.M.S. ladies. A freewill offering was received for the dinner, which was sent to the camp at Shipshewana.

After dinner, all returned to the sanctuary for more playing by the Benshoffs and lots of congregational singing.

— reported by Wilma Bizzell,  
corresponding secretary

Christmas is the season for kindling the fire of hospitality in the hall, the genial flame of charity in the heart.

— Washington Irving

# Religious Life Center Dedicated Nov. 10, 12 at Ashland University

**Ashland, Ohio** — Ashland University dedicated its newly renovated Center of Religious Life during ceremonies on Friday, November 10, and Sunday, November 12.

The Center, which is located in the lower level of AU's Memorial Chapel, features a large meeting room with multi-colored, faceted glass windows, several furnished conversation areas, a kitchen, and staff offices.

"The center provides an atmosphere that readily fosters fellowship, worship, and spiritual nurture," said Dr. Michael Gleason, AU's new director of religious life. "It serves as the hub of religious activity on campus."

Regular meetings and services are

held in the center by Hope Fellowship, Newman Catholic Society, and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Also, a Bible study and fellowship time for international students is held every Saturday at the Center.

The renovation was funded in part by a \$50,000 gift from the estate of Dr. Eunice Dean, an Ashland University education faculty member from 1954 to 1969 who viewed the opportunities for religious life on campus as an integral part of a student's education. Tribute was paid to the memory of Dr. Dean during the dedication service by Dr. James Lifer, professor of education at AU and a longtime friend of Dr. Dean until her death in 1987.



*Dr. Michael Gleason, AU's director of religious life, speaks during the dedication of the Center.*

Other funding for the renovation came from friends of the university and from the university itself. The faceted glass windows were funded by Charles Brereton (assistant professor of criminal justice) and his wife Patricia; James Simmermon (an AU trustee) and his wife; and Dr. and Mrs. Lifer.

In addition to Dr. Lifer, some of the other participants in the two dedication services were Dr. Gleason; Dr. Joseph Shultz, president of the university; Dr. Fred Finks, vice president for the seminary; Rev. David Cooksey, Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church; Brethren students Michelle Geaslen and Eric Bargerhuff, who sang special music, and Eric Schave, who led a hymn; and student senate president David Steiner, who played the piano prelude and postlude.



*A view of the large meeting room in the Center of Religious Life.*

## "Moving Forward by Faith" is Theme Of Homecoming at Masontown Church

**Masontown, Pa.** — The Masontown Brethren Church held a memorable homecoming on October 8, with the theme "Moving Forward by Faith."

Ashland Theological Seminary professor Dr. Jerry Flora was the guest speaker for the homecoming celebration. During the morning worship service, he delivered a stirring challenge to the congregation to demonstrate their faith by "Proclaiming Liberty Throughout the Land."

Mrs. Julie Flora assisted in the worship service by introducing the hymns. Musical selections were presented by the children's choir, which sang "The Lord's Prayer," and by the adult choir, which sang a "Faith Medley."

Following the morning services, a fellowship dinner was held with 92 in attendance. This was followed, in turn, by an afternoon program that included greetings from former pastors James Naff and Charles Berkshire, a devotional by Dr. Flora, and a time of sharing by those present.

As part of the homecoming celebration, a display of memorabilia was set up in the Sunday school annex. Included in the display were items that had belonged to Mary M. Sterling, an important early leader in The Brethren Church, who served as the pastor of the Masontown Brethren Church from 1891 to 1894.

Homecoming Sunday was also the

occasion of a 100 percent attendance Sunday school contest. The contest was won by the Young Adults/College Age class, which had the highest percentage of members present.

Another special event held in conjunction with this homecoming was a reunion of the Mission Class — the first reunion in 42 years. Both current and former members of the class enjoyed a great time of fellowship and fun during this Saturday evening event.

According to reporter Nancy Wilson, the Masontown Brethren Church is "Moving Forward by Faith" into the 90's by bonding together and by sharing and studying God's word. This was evidenced by the tremendous amount of work done by all the committees, individuals, and classes to make this homecoming celebration one to be remembered."



## West Alexandria Church Erects Three Crosses on Building Site

**West Alexandria, Ohio** — Many travelers in the eastern United States have seen at various places throughout the country a cluster of three crosses standing in a field or on a hill.

Now a set of those crosses stands on property owned by the First Brethren

Church of West Alexandria, a site on which the congregation intends to build a new facility in the future.

These clusters of crosses, called "Crosses of Mercy," are a project of Bernard L. Coffindaffer and his family of Craigsville, W. Va., known corporately as Cast Thy Bread, Inc. The Coffindaffer family embarked on this project of placing crosses in various locations around the country in September 1984.

Now clusters of three



*Four trustees from the West Alexandria First Brethren Church help two representatives of Cast Thy Bread, Inc., erect the Crosses of Mercy on the church property.*

*Photo by Luella Painter.*

## Big Day at Lathrop Includes Three Special Ceremonies

**Lathrop, Calif.** — Lathrop Brethren Church had a big day Sunday, September 17, with three ceremonies during morning worship.

In the first ceremony, three deacons and two deaconesses were ordained, culminating a year-long selection process. Ordained were Roger and Kathleen Downey, David and Terri Ozment, and Paul Hallett. Lathrop's pas-

tor, Rev. Roger Stogsdill officiated for the ordination ceremony.

Next, two children were dedicated to the Lord. Dedicated were Luke and John, the twin sons of Doug and Linda Walton.

Morning worship concluded with a service of baptism for five girls. Baptized were Angela Fink, April and Joanie Walton, and another set of twins, Tara and Teresa Rigdon.

What a day of rejoicing this was for the Lathrop congregation!

— reported by Pastor Roger Stogsdill



*Lathrop Pastor Roger Stogsdill (r.) officiates for the ordination of deacons and deaconesses (l. to r.) Roger and Kathleen Downey, David and Terri Ozment, and Paul Hallett.*

crosses stand at strategic locations in all 55 counties in West Virginia and at numerous other sites in that state. Crosses of Mercy have also been placed at various spots in a number of other eastern states — including the cluster on the West Alexandria First Brethren Church property. It is the hope of Cast Thy Bread, Inc., to locate crosses eventually in every state east of the Mississippi.

The purpose of the "Crosses of Mercy" is to provide a daily reminder to those who pass by that Jesus was crucified on a cross at Calvary for our sins, and that He will soon come again. The crosses also serve as a call to repentance.

Luella Painter, a member of the West Alexandria First Brethren Church, was instrumental in getting "Crosses of Mercy" erected on the West Alexandria site. She had seen the crosses along Interstates 70 and 77 while traveling to Florida and became interested in having a cluster nearby. She traveled to Indiana to see several sets, then in April her granddaughter went to Maryland and returned with information about the family responsible for erecting them.

She gave the information to Pastor David Olgee, who contacted Cast Thy Bread, Inc., and made arrangements for a set of crosses to be placed on the property owned by the church. On July 27 two men from West Virginia brought the crosses, and four trustees of the West Alexandria First Brethren Church helped them erect the crosses on the church property. The site is located along Route 503, south of the town of West Alexandria.

## Bradenton Church is Seeking Tentmaker to Work with Youth

**Bradenton, Fla.** — The Bradenton Brethren Church is seeking a single person or young couple with a desire to work with young people to come as a tentmaker and serve as youth director for the congregation.

This person or couple would work along side Rev. Buck Garrett, who will become pastor of the Bradenton Church around the 15th of December. The congregation is unable to pay for the services of a youth director at this time, but hopes to be able to do so in the future.

Anyone who feels called to serve the Lord in this capacity should contact Martha Ader, chair of the church's Outreach Ministry, 120-52nd Ave. Dr. W., Bradenton, FL 34207.

# Little Crusader

**Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).**



## WHAT IS CHRISTMAS REALLY ABOUT?

People have different ideas of what Christmas is all about. Some people think Christmas is about Santa Claus. Other people think that it is about Christmas trees and candy canes. Still others think that Christmas is about getting presents. But Christmas isn't really about any of these things. Christmas is the celebration of a very special person's birthday. That person is Jesus!

Jesus is God's Son. He is the Savior whom God promised long, long ago. He was born a tiny baby in a cold stable (barn). His new parents were poor. They wrapped Him in long strips of cloth because they didn't have any fancy baby clothes for Him. In fact, His family did not have many *things* at all, but their hearts were full of love for God, and they were willing to obey God even if it got scary.

God had promised a Savior. Some people thought God would send a mighty warrior. Other people thought God would send a rich person who could control others with his money. Instead, God sent a little-bitty baby, so small and helpless.

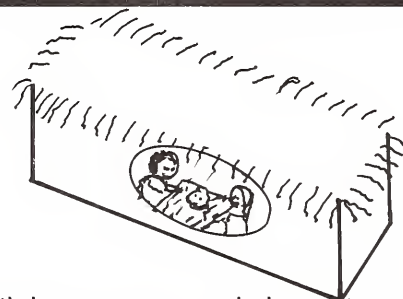
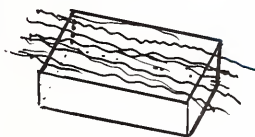
But you see, God did not send the kind of savior people expected because those are not His ways. God's way is not to fight, force, or control people. God's way is love that is gentle and kind — love that would even die on a cross for someone else. God's love brings peace and healing to our lonely hearts. God's way is Jesus. This is indeed the good news of the gospel.

*Have a blessed Christmas.*

## Make Your Own Nativity Scene

You will need:

a small gelatin or pudding box  
an empty tissue box  
yellow, white, and brown construction paper  
white glue or cellophane tape  
crayons and scissors



1. Lay your tissue box on its side as shown above. Cover it with brown paper and glue or tape the paper to the box. Be sure not to cover the "doorway" of the "stable."
2. Cover the top (roof) of the box with yellow paper, allowing the paper to dangle over the edges of the box. Snip the dangling edges to make them look like straw.
3. Draw a "Mary" and a "Joseph" on white paper. Cut them out and glue them to the inside back "wall" of your "stable."
4. Cover your pudding box manger with brown paper and glue or tape it to the box. Cut strips of yellow paper and glue or tape them to one of the wide sides of the box, as shown above.
5. Draw a "baby Jesus" on white paper. Cut him out and glue him to the "straw" side of your "manger." Put the manger inside the stable, close to Mary and Joseph.
6. You can read Luke 2:8-20 and Matthew 2:1-12 for ideas on other people and animals you can add to your nativity scene. Some can be glued to the outside of the stable, too.



## From The



## Grape Vine

The Gospel Teams of the past — groups of students who visit churches on weekends and lead worship services, youth activities, or other programs — are being revived by Ashland University. Churches interested may contact Dr. Michael Gleason or Mark Ray at the Center of Religious Life, Ashland University, Ashland, OH 44805, phone 419-289-5480 (Gleason) or 419-289-4186 (Ray).

**Ida Hanna**, a charter member of the First Brethren Church of Kokomo, Ind., celebrated her 95th birthday on October 20. She is also a deaconess of the congregation.

### In Memory

**Jessie M. Solomon**, 67, November 20. Member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Arden E. Gilmer. Mrs. Solomon was the wife of Rev. George W. Solomon, who preceded her in death Nov. 2, 1985. She and her husband were the parents of eight children (five daughters and three sons) of whom one is a pastor (Rev. Leroy Solomon, pastor of the Winding Waters Brethren Church of Elkhart, Ind.), and one is a pastor's wife (Deanna Benshoff, whose husband, David, pastors the Louisville, Ohio, Brethren Bible Church).

An active member of both the church and the Woman's Missionary Society, Mrs. Solomon was national W.M.S. president from 1976-77 and *Outlook Newsletter* national subscription secretary at the time of her death. At Park Street Church she was chair of the bereavement support group. She also did volunteer work for the American Red Cross Blood Bank, Meals on Wheels, Hospice of Ashland County, Inc., and various hospitals.

**Jurisa Garwood**, 98, November 5. Member for 77 years of the South Bend First Brethren Church, where she served as deaconess, Sunday school teacher, and choir member. She was named National Senior Citizen of the Year in 1976 by the

Benevolent Board of the Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Larry R. Baker.

**Julia Tinti**, 88, November 4. Member for 40 years of the Masontown Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Russell King.

**David Lee Slabaugh**, 26, October 30. Member of the Goshen First Brethren Church. Services by brothers-in-law Rev. David Stone and Rev. Tom Schiefer and father-in-law (and pastor) Rev. Donald Rowser. David was active in the Goshen Church as a choir member, youth leader, and in his Sunday school class. He was a national BYC Summer Crusader in 1983, national BYC moderator in 1984, and served on the National Board of Christian Education. (See box below.)

**Owen Horn**, 77, October 26. Member for 48 years of the Warsaw First Brethren Church, which he served as moderator, deacon, and Sunday school superintendent. Services by Dr. Howard Smith.

**Esther Mercer**, 92, October 27. Longtime member of the North Georgetown Brethren Church. Mrs. Mercer was the grandmother of Brethren pastor Rev. Lynn Mercer. Services by Pastor Bill Walk.

**Lowell D. Brown**, 85, October 26. Longtime member of the North Manchester First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Marlin McCann.

**Robert K. Higgins**, 75, October 24. Services by Timothy P. Garner, pastor of the Elkhart First Brethren Church. Rev. Higgins was ordained an elder at the Goshen First Brethren Church in 1947 and pas-

tored (in succession) the Mexico, Loree, and Elkhart Brethren Churches from 1947 to 1957, and following that several Church of the Brethren congregations.

**Esther Cripe Taylor**, 85, October 24. Member since 1916 of the North Manchester First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Marlin McCann.

**Allegra Ingleright**, 93, October 23. Member for 17 years of the South Bend First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Larry R. Baker.

**Olive M. Wright**, 92, October 22. Member of the North Manchester First Brethren Church. Services by Rev. Woodrow Immel.

**Clarence G. Durbin**, 73, September 29. Member of the Vinco Brethren Church, where he served as deacon, Sunday school teacher, and former trustee. Services by Pastor Carl H. Phillips.

**Luther K. Rowe**, 79, September 27. Member for five years of the Linwood Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Robert L. Keplinger.

**Lee Gerald Howard**, 78, September 25. Member for 63 years of the Mulvane First Brethren Church, which he served in many capacities. Services by Pastor Reilly Smith. **William G. Hook**, 68, September 4. Faithfully attended the Linwood Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Robert L. Keplinger.

### Weddings

**Jennifer Andrea Sipes to Richard Lee Klabansky**, October 21, at the Linwood Brethren Church; Pastor Robert L. Keplinger officiating. Bride a member of the Linwood Brethren Church.

**Tracey Lea Hagerich to Jeffrey Lee Brocious**, October 7, at the Vinco Brethren Church; Pastor Carl H. Phillips and Dr. Robert G. Swanson officiating. Bride a member of the Vinco Brethren Church.

**Deborah Blacksten to Timothy Talbert**, October 5, at the Linwood Brethren Church; Pastor Robert L. Keplinger officiating. Bride a member of the Linwood Brethren Church.

**Abby Evans to David Valentine**, September 23, at the Linwood Brethren Church; Pastor Robert L. Keplinger officiating. Bride a member of the Linwood Brethren Church.

**Patricia Sheedy to David Roy**, September 23, at the Linwood Brethren Church; Pastor Robert L. Keplinger officiating.

### Membership Growth

**Sarver**: 1 by transfer

**Oakville**: 5 by transfer

**Sergeantsville**: 9 by baptism

**West Alexandria**: 4 by baptism

**Bryan**: 4 by baptism, 1 by transfer

**Hillcrest**: 1 by baptism, 4 by transfer

**Warsaw**: 4 by baptism, 1 by transfer

**Jefferson**: 1 by baptism, 5 by transfer

**Louisville Brethren Bible**: 2 by baptism

**Meadow Crest**: 4 by baptism, 1 by transfer

**N. Manchester**: 2 by baptism, 2 by transfer

### With Deep Appreciation

On an October evening, David Lee Slabaugh approached eagerly the noontime of his life, but sunset came quickly. He was taken suddenly out of this life as the result of an auto accident with a drunk driver on October 30, 1989.

We have the faith to believe that he awoke to a new and glorious dawn.

The members of David's family express their deep appreciation for the outpouring of support, the many prayers and the numerous cards of sympathy which they received from friends all over the brotherhood. Your concern helped to sustain us in those dark hours and will continue to help us in the future. We all truly felt the abiding presence of a loving Heavenly Father through this experience.

Thank you again for caring.

*Tracy and Cara (wife and daughter)  
Max and Lori Slabaugh (David's parents)  
Don and Charlene Rowser (Tracy's parents)  
Other members of the families*



# BRETHREN MEN OF MISSION

## 1989-1990 GOALS

The goal of the Brethren Men should be Home Missions. As an organization within The Brethren Church, we need a commitment to be a vital part of the spiritual development and programming of the church. Home Missions is an ongoing area of need that offers great opportunity for involvement. This commitment to the Home Missions effort will involve all elements of stewardship: we will pray, we will give and we will become personally involved — all in cooperation with the Director of Home Missions.

### Initial Home Mission Goals

1. Increase Awareness and Support of Home Missions.
  - Conduct a service annually to promote local congregational support of Home Missions.
2. Growth Partners/Door Keepers/Faith Builders (financial commitment).
  - A 25% increase in the level of denominational giving.
  - Increase the number of financial supporters to at least 10% of each congregation's growth index.
3. Be "Brethren Barnraisers" (time and talent).
  - Support the development of Home Missions facilities by commitment to be available for actual physical work when needed and asked for by the Home Mission Board.
4. Be Recruiters.
  - Commitment to encourage and recruit youth to become pastors or to become involved in full-time Christian service.

The Home Mission Board goals, as they are refined and expanded in the future, will be a guide to the further development of the Brethren Men's goals.

### Suggested Activities and Responsibilities

#### Activities:

1. Adopt daily devotional regimen or program for participation of local men.
2. Organize one men-and-boys event during the year.
3. Organize one work project in conjunction with the trustees of the local church or district camp.
4. Organize a joint fellowship with the local Woman's Missionary Society or the local church women.
5. Conduct a Bible study and prayer meeting (breakfast) in cooperation with the pastor at least quarterly.
6. Be involved with visitation of local members, jail ministry, nursing home, or prospective believers in cooperation with the local pastor at least two times per year.
7. Provide a time of fellowship for the pastor and family, and/or deacons to honor their service.
8. Have a joint meeting with at least one other local congregation's Brethren Men's organization or men's group.
9. Support the district Brethren Men's organization with project giving and attendance at scheduled meetings.

#### Responsibilities:

1. Each local Brethren Men's organization to send a list of members' names and addresses including officers along with \$2.00 per member dues to the National Brethren Men's Organization treasurer by April 1.
2. Each local Brethren Men's organization is to send a contribution for the National Project either monthly, quarterly or annually to the National Brethren Men's Organization treasurer by August 31.
3. Actively support local church programs and activities whenever possible.
4. Report accomplishment of these and other activities, responsibilities and goals to the National Brethren Men's Organization secretary by July 1.

### PROJECTS FOR 1989-1990

1. Ashland Theological Seminary Brethren Student Scholarship (Project since 1973) ..... \$1,000
2. Brethren Publishing Company Endowment Fund (\$5,000 pledged over ten years) ..... \$500
3. Ashland University Brethren Student Aid Fund and Riverside Christian Training School ..... Equal Shares\*  
 \*The balance of the funds on hand as of December 31, 1990 (after all expenses paid and retaining a \$100 operating balance) shall be equally distributed.
4. Recruit 50 new members for the Growth Partners Club of the Missionary Board, which makes two calls per year for contributions for Home Mission churches at \$20.00 each or \$40.00 per year.

### BRETHREN MEN OF MISSION OFFICERS FOR 1989-1990

**President:** Jim Ford, 23100 Stanton Rd., Lakeville, IN 46536, 219-784-3635

**President-Elect:** Ken Van Duyne, 115 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805, 219-281-4891

**Past-President:** Dewayne Lusch, 1138 Swan St., Huntington, IN 46750, 219-356-3384

**Secretary:** Robert Crowe, 203 S. Shumaker Drive, Bremen, IN 46506, 219-546-3043

**Assistant Secretary:** Eugene Robbins, 6305 Hawkins Rd., Sarasota, FL 33582, 813-924-1604

**Treasurer:** Virgil Barnhart, 123 Paula Drive, Germantown, OH 45327, 513-855-2082

**Assistant Treasurer:** Stanley Gentle, Missionary Board, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805, 419-289-1708

**Trustees: 1990**—Homer Ebersole, Ohio; Paul Yoder, Florida; Brad Harnden, California

**1991**—Louis Finks, Southeastern; John Rieger, Midwest; Lynn Brown, Southwest

**1992**—Dewayne Lusch, Indiana; Bill Shultz, Pennsylvania; Richard Hutchison, Central



# END OF THE YEAR SALE\*

## Special Savings on Selected Brethren Books.

Meaningful Christmas Gifts For Your Loved Ones or Your Church Library.

### Brethren Hymnbooks and Hymnals, 1720-1884

by Donald Hinks. Describes and illustrates the English and German hymnbooks used by the Brethren for the first 176 years of their colorful history. Attractively bound in 9" x 9" format, 205 pages. A splendid gift for those interested in music or Brethren history.

Reg. \$19.50, Sale price \$12.50. Our best buy!

### The Brethren Encyclopedia

Three volumes including 2,000 topical articles, approx. 1,000 biographical articles, 2,600 congregational histories, 8,000 entry bibliography, 500 illustrations. 2,126 pages. Reg. \$130.00 plus \$7.00 postage and handling. Sale price \$110.00 plus \$4.00 postage and handling. A must for each Brethren family and church library.

### The Brethren in Colonial America

by Donald Durnbaugh. The fascinating account of the growth of the Brethren Church in America from the first Brethren immigration in 1719 through the Revolutionary War. 659 pages.

Reg. \$15.95, Sale price \$13.50.

### Sectarian Childrearing: The Dunkers 1708-1900

by Alvin E. Connor, M.D. A well-researched enjoyable account of the way in which the Brethren raised their children prior to 1900. Illus. 247 pages.

Reg. \$19.95, Sale price \$12.95.

### European Origins of the Brethren

by Donald Durnbaugh. The primary source book concerning the beginnings of the Brethren Church in the eighteenth century. 463 pages.

Reg. \$15.95, Sale price \$13.50.

### God's Means of Grace

by C.F. Yoder. A classic work presenting a thorough examination of the Brethren denominational distinctives. 631 pages.

Reg. \$12.50, Sale price \$10.95.

### Recipes From Dunker Kitchens

Reva Benedict, ed. Over 900 favorite recipes of the Old Order Brethren. A thoughtful gift to anyone who loves to cook. 309 pages.

Reg. \$12.95, Sale price \$10.95.

### Original Leaf from the Historic 1763 Sower Bible

Printed by the Brethren elder, Christopher Sower II. Attractively mounted in gold embossed folder. A nice display item.

\$12.50 postpaid.

*\*End of the Year Sale ends January 15, 1990.*

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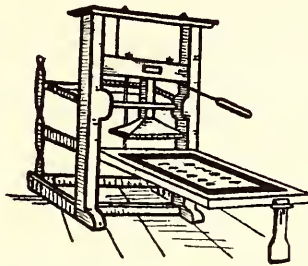


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